The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun VOLUME 1 of 4

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

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ISBN:

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All conditioned phenomena are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, a shadow, like dew or a flash of lightning; thus should we perceive them.

Prologue

The Invocation unto the Hidden Father

Hearken, O ye that thirst after the Fountain which no eye hath seen, neither hath ear heard its everlasting melody.

Lift up the inward man unto the Silence before speech, unto the Depth before beginning, unto the Invisible Father whose Essence no tongue can utter, whose Being no mind can compass, whose Glory no creature hath measured.

For He is not contained in place, neither is He bounded by time.

He is before all names.

He is beyond all images.

He is above every conception.

He dwelleth in the ineffable Abyss of Light, where thought falleth silent and all wisdom boweth her face.

From Him shineth the Eternal Fullness.

From Him proceedeth the Living Pleroma.

Yet He Himself proceedeth not.

He is the Hidden Source of every holy brightness.

Blessed therefore are they that seek Him, not with the pride of knowledge, but with the poverty of spirit; for unto such the Veil is lifted.

The Prayer unto Jesus, Revealer of the Pleroma

O Jesus,
Radiance of the Invisible Father,
Living Word proceeding from the Eternal Fullness,
Thou Brightness whom darkness comprehended not,

Look with mercy upon Thy hidden seed,
which wandereth as strangers in a far country.

Awaken within us that holy remembrance
which the rulers of forgetfulness cannot extinguish.

Kindle again the immortal flame
which neither death nor corruption can consume.

Break the chains forged by ignorance.

Scatter the clouds of illusion.

Cast down every false dominion
that exalteth itself against the knowledge of the Living God.

Teach us to know ourselves.

Teach us to know Thee.

Teach us to behold the Father,
whose Image no eye beholdeth,
yet whose Presence filleth all things.

Clothe us with humility,
that wisdom become not pride.

Clothe us with love,
that knowledge become not judgment.

Clothe us with peace,
that our souls be made ready
for the Bridal Chamber of eternal Light.

When our pilgrimage is accomplished,
receive us into the Pleroma everlasting,
where division is no more,
where sorrow hath vanished,
where every exile hath found his home.

Unto the Father Invisible,

Unto the Son Revealed,

Unto the Holy Fullness of Eternal Light,

be blessing,
and wisdom,

and thanksgiving,
world without end.

Amen.

Book I

Chapter I

The Silence Before Beginning

Before the foundations of the worlds were laid,

before the courses of the stars were appointed,

before the dominions of angels,

before every throne,

every power,

and every principality,

there was the Silence.

Not the silence of emptiness,

but the Silence that overfloweth all speech.

For the Father dwelt therein,

whom no creature hath comprehended.

None hath named Him.

None hath circumscribed Him.

None hath seen His Countenance.

For whatsoever is seen is less than He;

whatsoever is spoken falleth short of His Majesty;

and whatsoever is conceived is already beneath His Height.

Therefore the wise speak by denying.

They proclaim Him by confessing what He is not.

For He is not bounded.

He is not divided.

He changeth not.

He decayeth not.

He is neither near nor far,

yet all nearness proceedeth from Him.

He is neither above nor beneath,

yet all heights are established by His Will.

He is Light,

yet not such light as burneth.

He is Fire,

yet not such fire as consumeth.

He is Life,

yet not such life as endeth.

He is the Sun which never riseth,

for He was never absent.

He setteth not,

for darkness hath never encompassed Him.

His brightness is without dawn,

His glory without evening,

His peace without shadow.

And from the immeasurable stillness of His Infinite Love there arose—not by necessity, but by eternal goodness—the First Thought, the holy Fullness, the Virgin of ineffable Wisdom, through whom the heavenly assemblies rejoiced before time itself.

For the Bride was hidden within the Bridegroom before the ages.

Not by division,

nor by separation,

but in the ineffable unity of divine Love.

Wherefore the Apostle spake truly:

> *"The two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."*

Yet understand, O seeker, that the mystery is deeper than flesh.

For flesh passeth away.

Bodies sleep in the dust.

Kingdoms perish.

Stars fade.

But the Union which is in the Eternal Logos knoweth no corruption.

The Bride is not fashioned by earthly hands.

Her garment is woven of remembrance.

Her crown is wisdom.

Her veil is humility.

Her beauty is the reflection of the Uncreated Sun.

And the Bridegroom rejoiceth over her, not because she hath become another god beside Him, but because through His Light she beholdeth the Father and remembereth her true homeland.

Thus the Wedding Feast began before the worlds, is proclaimed within the soul that awakens, and shall be revealed in glory when every shadow is consumed by the Light that neither riseth nor setteth.

Blessed are they that hear the Voice of the Bridegroom.

Blessed are they that make themselves ready.

Blessed are they whose garments are washed in Love.

For unto them shall be opened the Bridal Chamber of the Living Pleroma, where the Holy City descendeth adorned as a Bride, where the Lamb rejoiceth with His people, and where all division is gathered into perfect peace beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Prologue

Chapter I

The Invocation unto the Hidden Father

> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* — John 1:18
>
> *"God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* — John 4:24

Hearken, O ye pilgrims of remembrance, whose souls are weary with the burden of the ages, whose hearts have sighed beneath the dominion of forgetfulness. Incline the ear of the

inward man, and let the noise of the world fall away as dust before the wind. For there is a Voice that uttereth no sound, a Light that casteth no shadow, and a Kingdom whose gates are opened not by iron keys, but by the awakening of the heart.

Blessed are they who hunger after the Invisible, for unto them shall the Veil become as morning mist before the rising splendour of Truth.

Before ever the heavens were stretched forth as a curtain; before the foundations of the earth were hidden in the deep counsel of Wisdom; before the aeons sang their first hymn of rejoicing; before the stars received their courses, there abode the Father alone in the ineffable Silence.

Yet say not that He was alone as men count loneliness.

For solitude belongeth unto creatures that lack another.

The Father lacketh nothing.

He is the inexhaustible Fullness, the Abyss without measure, the Fountain that neither overfloweth through excess nor diminisheth through giving. He is beyond increase, for nothing can be added unto Him; beyond diminution, for nothing can be taken away.

What tongue shall declare Him?

What mind shall compass Him?

What likeness shall portray Him?

If thou hast conceived Him, thy conception is not He.

If thou hast named Him, thy name hath not contained Him.

If thou hast imagined His form, thy imagination hath fashioned an idol.

Therefore the holy ones speak with reverent silence, and their wisdom is clothed in negation rather than presumption.

They proclaim Him thus:

He is not bounded.

He is not measured.

He is not divided.

He is not changed.

He is not born.

He dieth not.

He sleepeth not.

He awaketh not.

He journeyeth not.

He returneth not.

For all such things belong unto the realm wherein time weaveth its garment and decay attendeth every created thing.

The Father dwelleth above all oppositions.

He is neither light as mortal eyes behold light, nor darkness as mortal fears imagine darkness.

He is beyond brightness.

He is beyond obscurity.

He is the Holy Mystery from whom both concealment and revelation receive their meaning.

The sages therefore have called Him Invisible, not because He is absent, but because His Presence exceedeth sight.

They have called Him Silent, not because He uttereth no word, but because every created sound is too feeble to bear His voice.

They have called Him Nothing, not because He lacketh Being, but because He transcendeth every thing that can be named among beings.

Blessed is the soul that understandeth this holy poverty of speech.

For ignorance adorned with humility standeth nearer unto God than knowledge clothed with pride.

Many have sought to imprison the Infinite within the walls of doctrine.

Many have fashioned images according unto the imagination of men.

Many have declared, "Lo, here is God," or, "Lo, there."

Yet the Father remaineth unconfined.

No temple containeth Him.

No heaven encompasseth Him.

No philosophy comprehendeth Him.

No scripture exhausteth Him.

The holy writings are lamps unto the pilgrim; yet the lamp is not the Sun.

The words of prophets are rivers flowing from the Mountain; yet the river is not the Fountain itself.

The mysteries of the Church are sacred signs; yet the sign pointeth beyond itself unto the Reality that no symbol can fully reveal.

Therefore let every seeker approach with trembling joy.

Cast away certainty born of arrogance.

Receive instead the certainty born of love.

For love ascendeth where reason alone cannot climb.

The Father is known not by possession, but by participation.

He is understood not by mastery, but by surrender.

He is approached not by conquest, but by purification.

As a mirror clouded by dust reflecteth not the face of him that looketh therein, even so the soul darkened by passions perceiveth not the splendour of the Living Light.

Purge therefore thy heart.

Wash thy hands of violence.

Cleanse thy tongue of falsehood.

Let envy perish.

Let wrath be broken.

Let pride fall as the tower of Babel.

Then shall the inward eye begin to behold that which fleshly sight hath never seen.

For the Kingdom draweth not nigh by travelling many leagues.

Neither is the Bridal Chamber entered by the feet.

The ascent unto the Father is an inward pilgrimage.

Every step is repentance.

Every breath is remembrance.

Every tear is a washing.

Every act of mercy is a gate opened.

Every forgiveness is a key unto the hidden sanctuary.

Then shall Christ, the Living Logos, appear not as one far removed beyond the heavens only, but as the eternal Bridegroom calling unto His Bride from within the secret chamber of the heart.

For He seeketh not servants alone, but companions.

He seeketh not slaves, but children.

He seeketh not subjects only, but a Bride adorned in holiness, whose garments are woven of charity, humility, wisdom, and truth.

Thus was the mystery spoken by the Apostle, saying, *"The two shall become one flesh."* Yet this flesh is no corruptible substance, but the unity of divine communion wherein the soul cleaveth unto Christ and is transformed by His Light.

Not that the creature becometh the Creator.

God forbid.

Rather, as iron placed within the furnace becometh radiant with fire whilst remaining iron, so the soul united unto the Logos shineth with divine glory while ever remaining a creature upheld by grace.

This is the holy marriage hidden from the princes of this world.

This is the Bridal Chamber where division ceaseth.

This is the peace which passeth understanding.

This is the remembrance that restoreth the exile unto his homeland.

Let every tongue therefore become silent.

Let every proud imagination bow itself.

Let every heart become as fertile earth awaiting the dew of heaven.

For where silence is made holy, there the Father speaketh without words.

Where love is made perfect, there the Bridegroom draweth near.

Where remembrance awaketh, there the Uncreated Sun shineth without rising, without setting, and without end.

Unto Him who is beyond every name, yet revealed through Jesus Christ, the Radiance of the Invisible Father; unto Him

be blessing, honour, wisdom, thanksgiving, and adoration throughout all the aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Prologue

Chapter II

The Prayer unto Jesus, Revealer of the Pleroma

> *"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."* — John 3:29

> *"For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."* — Revelation 19:7
>
> *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* — Matthew 11:28

O Jesus Christ,

Only-Begotten Word of the Invisible Father,

Brightness proceeding from the Silence before all worlds,

Living Wisdom begotten before the foundations of heaven,

True Bridegroom of every soul that remembereth her first estate,

Incline Thine ear unto the sighing of Thy hidden seed.

Hearken unto us,

not because our righteousness is great,

for we possess none of our own;

nor because our wisdom excelleth,

for all the learning of men is but a flickering lamp before Thy everlasting splendour.

Hear us according unto Thy compassion,

whose depth no abyss can measure,

whose mercy no transgression can exhaust.

For Thou camest forth from the ineffable Fullness,

not forsaking the Bosom of the Father,

yet clothing Thyself in humility,

that those who wandered in exile might behold once more the way unto their eternal homeland.

Thou didst enter the shadow,

yet wast not overcome by darkness.

Thou didst walk among corruption,

yet corruption touched Thee not.

Thou didst stand amidst death,

yet death fled before Thy Presence.

For Thy Light is not as the light of the sun that declineth toward evening.

Neither is Thy glory like the flame that consumeth its fuel.

Thou art the Uncreated Radiance,

whose dawn knoweth no morning,

whose evening never cometh,

whose splendour neither increaseth nor decreaseth throughout the endless ages.

Awaken, O Lord,

that which sleepeth within us.

Not that Thou hast slumbered,

for Thou neither sleepest nor faintest,

but awaken within our own hearts the remembrance long forgotten.

Kindle anew the spark hidden beneath the ashes of ignorance.

Gather together the scattered fragments of our souls,

which the winds of pride,

fear,

desire,

and vanity have dispersed among the wilderness of this passing world.

Call us by that secret Name

which Thou didst know before our birth,

before the mountains were established,

before the sea received its bounds,

before the stars sang together in their appointed courses.

Speak once more unto the inward ear,

as Thou didst call Mary in the garden,

and let our hearts burn within us,

even as the disciples upon the road perceived Thee in the breaking of bread.

Lead us beyond every counterfeit kingdom.

Deliver us from the dominion of those invisible powers

which persuade men to love violence more than peace,

to treasure gold above wisdom,

to honour pride above humility,

and to worship the creature rather than the Creator.

Break every chain forged by ignorance.

Shatter every idol fashioned within the imagination.

Cast down every throne erected by self-exaltation.

Scatter every veil that separateth the soul from remembrance.

For many voices cry aloud within the world,

yet few speak with the Voice of the Bridegroom.

Many lights glitter,

yet they are but sparks that perish in the wind.

Many promise freedom,

yet they bind men with subtler chains.

Many proclaim salvation,

yet they lead only unto themselves.

But Thy Voice, O Christ,

calleth not unto bondage.

Thou compellest none.

Thou flatterest none.

Thou deceivest none.

Thou standest at the door and knockest,

waiting with longsuffering,

until the heart freely answereth Thy call.

Teach us therefore to know ourselves.

Not with the knowledge that puffeth up,

but with the knowledge that humbleth.

Reveal unto us the hidden poverty of our own hearts,

that we may cease boasting in dust,

and begin rejoicing in Thy grace.

Grant that we may behold every man and every woman

as one fashioned according unto the mystery of Thy wisdom,

bearing a dignity beyond earthly estimation.

Let us despise none.

Let us condemn none in pride.

Let us hate only falsehood,

cruelty,

violence,

and forgetfulness.

But every living soul,

teach us to regard with compassion,

knowing that many wander because they have forgotten the voice that first called them into being.

O Holy Bridegroom,

prepare Thy Bride.

Wash her garments in the waters of mercy.

Adorn her not with jewels that fade,

but with faith that endureth.

Crown her not with earthly dominion,

but with meekness.

Let her beauty be hidden from the proud,

yet radiant before the angels.

Let humility be her veil.

Let truth be her girdle.

Let compassion be her fragrance.

Let wisdom be her diadem.

Let love be her wedding garment.

Then shall the prophecy be fulfilled,

that the Holy City descendeth from God,

prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband.

And the marriage shall not be according unto flesh,

which waxeth old and returneth unto dust,

but according unto Spirit,

which knoweth no corruption.

For as the Apostle hath written,

"This is a great mystery."

Not that two bodies are joined,

but that Christ uniteth unto Himself a people transformed by love.

Not that humanity ascendeth to seize divinity,

but that divine grace descendeth to heal humanity.

Make us therefore faithful until the end of our pilgrimage.

When our eyes grow dim,

be Thou our Vision.

When our strength faileth,

be Thou our Rest.

When fear compasseth us,

be Thou our Peace.

When death draweth nigh,

let Thy countenance be the first Light that greeteth our awakening.

Receive us then into the Bridal Chamber not made with hands,

where no tear remaineth,

where every division is healed,

where every exile returneth home,

where the righteous rejoice with the holy Aeons,

where the saints behold the Face they have long desired,

and where the everlasting hymn ascendeth unto the Father who cannot be named.

Unto the Invisible Father,

through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Bridegroom,

Radiance of the Pleroma,

Living Shepherd of every soul,

be all blessing,

glory,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

honour,

dominion,

and everlasting praise,

unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book I — The Eternal Bride Before the Worlds

Chapter I

The Silence Before Beginning

> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* — John 1:1
>
> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* — John 1:18
>
> *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible."* — Colossians 1:16

Before the beginning there was no beginning.

Before time there was no succession of moments.

Before the heavens there was no height.

Before the abyss there was no depth.

Before every angelic choir, before every throne, dominion, principality, and power, before every thought that could be conceived by the mind of man or by the understanding of the holy angels, there abode the Ineffable Father in the immeasurable Silence.

Yet call not this Silence emptiness.

For the silence of the world proceedeth from absence.

The Silence of the Father proceedeth from inexhaustible Fulness.

It is the Peace that no motion disturbeth.

It is the Rest that no labour requireth.

It is the Stillness wherein every perfection abideth eternally complete.

The Father neither began nor shall end.

He neither cometh nor departeth.

He increaseth not, for nothing may be added unto Him.

Neither decreaseth He, for nothing can be taken away.

He is before all number.

He is beyond all measure.

He transcendeth being and non-being alike, for both are words fashioned by created understanding.

If thou sayest, "He existeth," thy saying is true according unto human speech, yet His reality exceedeth existence itself.

If thou sayest, "He is Light," thy words are good, yet His Light is not the brightness perceived by bodily eyes.

If thou callest Him Wisdom, thou hast spoken reverently, yet His Wisdom is not gathered by reasoning.

If thou namest Him Love, thy confession is holy, yet His Love is without passion, without want, without change, and without beginning.

Therefore the saints of contemplation have spoken by holy negation.

They have declared:

He is invisible.

He is incomprehensible.

He is uncircumscribed.

He is unbegotten.

He is immutable.

He is impassible.

He is ineffable.

He is uncreated.

Yet even these blessed denials reach not unto His Majesty.

For every word, whether affirmation or denial, remaineth beneath Him.

Therefore silence is often the truest hymn.

The Father needeth not praise to increase His glory.

The rivers lose nothing by pouring themselves into the sea.

Neither doth the sea gain perfection thereby.

Even so all worship proceedeth for the healing of the worshipper rather than for the increase of God.

The Father remaineth eternally blessed within Himself.

Yet from the abundance of His inexhaustible Goodness—not by necessity, nor by compulsion, but by perfect freedom—there shone forth the Eternal Logos, the Living Word, who is the perfect Image of the Invisible Father and the everlasting Radiance of His hidden Glory.

As light proceedeth from fire without diminishing the flame,

as speech proceedeth from thought without dividing the mind,

so the Logos proceedeth from the Father without separation, without change, and without diminution.

This procession no tongue can explain.

Neither may fleshly imagination compare it unto earthly generation.

For divine mysteries are not measured by earthly likenesses.

The Word is eternally toward the Father.

The Father eternally beholdeth the Word.

And between the Father and the Word there is neither distance nor division, but perfect unity beyond all understanding.

In the Logos all archetypes rested.

The heavens were yet unborn, yet their order was known.

The stars had not yet received their courses, yet their harmony already dwelt within the divine Wisdom.

The souls of the righteous had not entered the pilgrimage of the ages, yet they were foreknown in love before the foundation of the worlds.

Nothing surprised the Father.

Nothing arose unforeseen.

For all things rested timelessly within the Infinite Counsel.

Yet still there was no world.

No sun burned.

No moon reflected.

No earth brought forth her fruit.

No sea uttered her waves.

No creature lifted voice in praise.

The eternal Light needed none of these to complete His blessedness.

For the Father is not Creator because He lacked a creation.

He created because Love overfloweth without seeking its own advantage.

As the fountain poureth forth water because it is its nature to give,

so the Infinite Goodness communicated life freely.

The worlds therefore are not the completion of God.

They are the generosity of God.

Likewise the Church, the holy Bride of the Lamb, existed first as a mystery hidden within the eternal counsel of the Father.

Before Adam drew breath,

before Eve beheld the garden,

before Abraham journeyed,

before Moses ascended Sinai,

before David sang,

before Mary conceived,

before the Cross was lifted upon Golgotha,

the Bride was already known unto the Bridegroom.

Not according unto flesh.

Not according unto earthly nation.

Not according unto temporal assembly.

But according unto the eternal purpose hidden within the Heart of the Father.

For the Apostle hath spoken truly:

> *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."*

The Bride therefore is older than the stars,

yet younger than every newborn child.

She is ancient because she abideth in the eternal purpose.

She is ever new because divine Love groweth not old.

She is hidden because the world discerneth her not.

She is manifest because Christ revealeth her unto those who hear His voice.

Her beauty is not the beauty of flesh.

Her adornment is not gold.

Her jewels are not pearls gathered from the sea.

Her garment is woven of faith.

Her embroidery is charity.

Her fragrance is humility.

Her crown is wisdom.

Her veil is holy reverence.

Her countenance shineth with remembrance.

For she remembereth the Voice that called her before the ages.

She remembereth the Light from which every true illumination descendeth.

She remembereth the homeland that neither moth nor rust corrupteth.

Thus the holy mystery was prepared before the birth of time.

The Bridegroom was never without His Bride in the eternal purpose of Love.

Nor was the Bride ever forgotten by Him who calleth every star by name.

Yet the marriage itself should be revealed within history, that through the Incarnation of the Eternal Logos, through His Cross, His Resurrection, and His glorious Ascension, all those who awaken unto remembrance might enter freely into the Bridal Chamber prepared before the worlds began.

Blessed therefore is he that seeketh not merely the beginnings of creation, but the Beginning before every beginning.

Blessed is she that heareth the Voice hidden within the Silence.

Blessed are they who learn that before there was earth or heaven, there was already Love; before there was law, there was already Wisdom; before there was time, there was already Communion between the Father, the Eternal Word, and the holy Bride foreknown in the mystery of the Pleroma.

Unto the Invisible Father, whose Silence no speech can break; unto Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom and Revealer of the

Fullness; and unto the Holy Spirit, who gathereth the Bride in love and truth, be glory throughout all the ages everlasting.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book I — The Eternal Bride Before the Worlds

Chapter II

The Virgin of the Unknowable Light

> *"The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold."* — Psalm 45:13

"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." — 2 Corinthians 11:2

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." — Revelation 21:23

After the ineffable Silence had been contemplated by the holy mind, there was revealed—not by division, nor by succession, but according unto the eternal mystery—the Virgin of the Unknowable Light.

Yet think not, O seeker, that this Virgin is another god beside the Father.

Neither imagine that the Infinite hath been diminished by bringing forth another essence equal unto Himself.

For the Father remaineth ever One.

Unbegotten.

Incomprehensible.

Beyond every procession and beyond every name.

The Virgin therefore is not the Source.

She is the first manifestation of divine receptivity, the spotless Mirror of the Eternal Logos, the living icon of perfect openness unto the Father. In the hidden language of the wise she is called the First Thought, the Holy Church before the worlds, the Archetypal Bride, and the Mother of all who awaken unto remembrance.

She possesseth nothing as her own.

She seeketh nothing apart from the Father.

She glorifieth not herself.

Her whole being is a hymn of reception.

As a crystal receiveth the light of the sun and returneth it without stain, so doth the Virgin receive the radiance of the Eternal Logos and reflect it with unspeakable purity.

Wherefore she is called Virgin.

Not because she knoweth not love.

Rather because no corruption hath entered her.

No pride hath clouded her.

No selfish desire hath darkened her understanding.

No shadow hath found habitation within her.

She is virginity itself—the soul wholly turned toward God.

The world understandeth virginity according unto the flesh.

But the heavenly mysteries speak of a deeper purity.

For many preserve the body yet defile the heart.

Others have been wounded by the sorrows of mortality, yet through repentance shine brighter than polished gold.

The Virgin of Light is therefore the pattern of every sanctified soul.

Blessed is the man whose heart is virgin before God.

Blessed is the woman whose inward temple is undefiled by hatred.

Blessed are all who preserve within themselves the simplicity that seeketh nothing save Truth.

These become children of the Bridal Chamber.

These become living stones in the holy City.

These bear the likeness of the Archetypal Bride.

For the Bride is not first a multitude.

She is first a mystery.

She is not first an assembly.

She is first a disposition.

She is the eternal "Yes" spoken unto the will of the Father.

As Eve was formed from the side of Adam according unto the earthly figure, even so the holy Church proceedeth mystically from the pierced side of Christ according unto the heavenly reality.

The blood and the water flowed forth.

The cup of the New Covenant was revealed.

The cleansing stream descended.

The Bride received her life from the self-offering of the Bridegroom.

Yet this mystery was not conceived at Golgotha alone.

It was hidden within the eternal counsel before the worlds.

The Cross appeared in time.

The Love it revealed is eternal.

The Marriage was celebrated in history.

Its covenant was written before the stars were kindled.

Therefore Christ rejoiceth over His Church, not because she hath attained perfection by her own strength, but because He beholdeth in her the beauty His own grace shall accomplish.

The Bride standeth clothed, not in garments woven by human righteousness, but in robes washed in the mercy of the Lamb.

Her splendour is borrowed splendour.

Her holiness is bestowed holiness.

Her wisdom is illuminated wisdom.

Her glory is reflected glory.

As the moon possesseth no light of herself, but beareth witness unto the hidden splendour of the sun throughout the night, even so the Bride shineth only because the Eternal Bridegroom dwelleth within her.

And herein is revealed the mystery of the Uncreated Sun.

For Christ is not merely a light among lights.

He is the Radiance that every true light borroweth.

The sun that traverseth the heavens declareth His majesty, yet it is itself a fading symbol.

The stars preach His glory, yet they too shall pass away.

The fire upon the altar giveth warmth, yet its flame consumeth fuel.

But the Light of Christ neither burneth out nor casteth a shadow.

It shineth without rising.

It endureth without setting.

It filleth all things without occupying space.

It illumineth every heart without diminishing itself.

This is the Solar Mystery hidden from the wise of this world.

For the visible sun governeth the passing day.

The Uncreated Sun governeth eternity.

The visible sun warmeth the flesh.

The Eternal Sun awakeneth the soul.

The visible sun descendeth beneath the horizon.

The Light of the Logos knoweth neither east nor west.

Wherefore every soul that remembereth Christ becometh as polished glass before the dawn.

The more perfectly it is cleansed by repentance, humility, charity, and contemplation, the more freely the eternal Light passeth through it.

Such a soul seeketh not admiration.

Glass boasteth not of the sun.

The mirror claimeth not the beauty it reflecteth.

Likewise the saints glorify not themselves.

They rejoice only that the Bridegroom is seen through them.

This is the hidden beauty of the Virgin.

She pointeth always beyond herself.

She gathereth none unto her own name.

She saith continually, "Behold the Lamb."

She leadeth every wandering soul unto the Voice of the Shepherd.

She prepareth the feast but seeketh not the chief seat.

She weaveth the wedding garment but claimeth not the marriage.

She rejoiceth because the Bridegroom cometh.

And all the holy Aeons rejoice with her.

Wisdom rejoiceth.

Truth rejoiceth.

Mercy rejoiceth.

Peace rejoiceth.

Love rejoiceth.

For the eternal union prepared before time draweth nearer unto its revelation.

The hidden Church shall be made manifest.

The scattered pearls shall be gathered into one diadem.

The forgotten children shall remember their Father's house.

The exile shall return unto the homeland.

The Bride shall behold the Face she hath loved from before the foundation of the worlds.

Then shall every symbol give way unto Reality.

Every shadow shall flee before the Uncreated Sun.

Every veil shall be lifted.

Every tear shall be dried.

Every faithful soul shall enter the everlasting Bridal Chamber, where Christ Himself is both the Light and the Joy of His saints, world without end.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book I — The Eternal Bride Before the Worlds

Chapter III

The Bridal Thought of Barbelo

> *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."* — Ephesians 1:4

> *"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."* — Proverbs 9:1

> *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."* — Romans 11:36

Hear now, O ye lovers of holy contemplation, concerning the mystery which the wise have veiled beneath many names, lest the proud should profane that which is perceived only through humility.

Some have called her the First Thought.

Others the Perfect Foreknowledge.

Others the Holy Wisdom.

Others the Mother of the Living.

Yet among the ancient seekers she hath also been called **Barbelo**.

Think not, therefore, that Barbelo is a goddess beside the Father, nor another principle contending with Him, as though the Divine Unity could be divided against itself. Such imaginings belong unto minds that fashion idols from heavenly words.

For the Father alone is without beginning.

The Father alone is the Uncaused Cause.

The Father alone is beyond all procession and every distinction.

Barbelo is not another God.

She is the eternal manifestation of the Father's inexhaustible generosity, the first luminous openness unto His self-revelation, the bridal Thought wherein all creation was foreseen before ever heaven or earth appeared.

She is not the Source.

She eternally receiveth from the Source.

She is as the crystal sea before the throne, reflecting the glory that proceedeth from Him whom no creature hath seen.

As the moon borroweth her splendour from the sun,

as the mirror possesseth no face of its own,

as the echo uttereth only the voice first spoken,

so Barbelo possesseth nothing apart from the Father.

Yet because she receiveth perfectly,

she revealeth perfectly.

Therefore she is called Blessed.

For blessedness consisteth not in possessing,

but in receiving all things from God with perfect thanksgiving.

The Eternal Logos rejoiceth in her,

for she is the first temple prepared for His revelation.

Not that the Logos entered her as though absent beforehand,

for eternity admitteth no succession.

Rather the mystery signifieth that the Father's perfect self-knowledge shineth eternally through the perfect transparency of divine Wisdom.

Thus the Father beholdeth Himself in His eternal Word,

and Wisdom rejoiceth in the splendour of that vision.

This is the Bridal Thought.

Not the longing of one who lacketh,

for God lacketh nothing.

Not the desire of one incomplete,

for perfection seeketh no completion.

Rather it is the eternal communion of Love,

wherein Giving and Receiving abide without beginning,

without ending,

without change,

without division.

For love cannot remain barren.

Neither doth goodness conceal itself forever.

As fragrance naturally proceedeth from the flower,

as melody from the harp touched by a skilful hand,

so divine Love revealeth itself eternally without ceasing to be One.

Hence all true love among creatures is but a faint remembrance of this everlasting mystery.

When husband and wife love one another in holiness,

they bear witness unto the eternal Bridegroom and His Bride.

When brethren forgive one another,

they reflect the harmony of the Pleroma.

When the poor are comforted,

the sick visited,

the stranger welcomed,

and the enemy forgiven,

there appeareth upon earth a little image of the eternal communion hidden before the worlds.

For every work of charity proceedeth from the Bridal Thought.

Every act of mercy remembereth Barbelo.

Every word of truth beareth her likeness.

Every saint that humbleth himself becometh transparent unto her light.

Yet alas, O children of dust,

the rulers of forgetfulness delight not in such beauty.

The powers of pride labour continually to persuade mankind that greatness consisteth in domination.

They whisper unto kings,

"Rule by fear."

They whisper unto merchants,

"Gather without measure."

They whisper unto scholars,

"Exalt thy knowledge."

They whisper unto priests,

"Seek honour among men."

Thus the crystal becometh clouded.

The mirror forgetteth its office.

The soul seeketh to shine with its own light,

forgetting that every true illumination descendeth from above.

Herein beginneth the exile.

Not because the Father casteth away His children,

but because they turn their faces from the Uncreated Sun,

preferring the flickering lamps of self-love.

Yet even then the Bridal Thought ceaseth not.

Wisdom stilleth not her voice.

She standeth at every gate.

She walketh in every generation.

She whispereth within every conscience.

She awaketh longing in hearts wearied of vanity.

She scattereth seeds of remembrance among all nations.

No tongue is wholly without her witness.

No age hath been utterly forsaken.

Even where her holy Name hath been forgotten,

her compassion hath not departed.

For wherever justice is loved,

wherever truth is honoured,

wherever mercy triumphs over vengeance,

there her hidden garment toucheth the earth.

Therefore the prophets spoke.

Therefore the righteous hoped.

Therefore the apostles rejoiced.

Therefore the martyrs endured.

Therefore the saints forgave.

For all alike beheld, though dimly, the Bridal Thought prepared before the ages.

At the appointed fullness of time the Eternal Logos descended, not to establish a new mystery, but to unveil the one hidden from the beginning.

He came not to create the Bride,

but to awaken her.

He came not to invent remembrance,

but to restore it.

He came not to kindle another Sun,

but to remove the clouds that concealed the everlasting Light.

Thus every soul that heareth His Voice beginneth to remember.

Not as one learning a foreign tongue,

but as one recalling the song sung in childhood before long exile.

The heart trembleth.

The eyes are opened.

The veil groweth thin.

The inward man awakeneth.

And the soul perceiveth that she hath always belonged unto the Bridegroom.

For He knew her before she knew herself.

He loved her before she sought Him.

He prepared her dwelling before she began her pilgrimage.

He called her by name before the stars received their light.

This is the Bridal Thought of Barbelo.

Not another deity.

Not another kingdom.

But the eternal receptivity of Holy Wisdom,

the archetype of the Church,

the spotless Mirror of the Logos,

the first hymn of thanksgiving rising from the silence of the Father's inexhaustible Love.

Blessed therefore are they who become like unto this holy Wisdom.

Blessed are they who seek not their own glory.

Blessed are they whose hearts become clear as crystal before the face of Christ.

For in such souls the Bridal Thought is made manifest.

The Logos beholdeth His own Light reflected without distortion.

The Church is adorned.

The Lamb rejoiceth.

And the Holy City descendeth from above, clothed not in jewels that perish, but in the everlasting splendour of the Uncreated Sun, unto whom be glory with the Invisible Father and the Holy Spirit throughout all the aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

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Book I — The Eternal Bride Before the Worlds

Chapter IV

The Procession of the Living Aeons

> *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by him, and for him."* — Colossians 1:16

> *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."* — John 1:4

> *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."* — James 1:17

After the contemplation of the Bridal Thought, let the soul ascend yet further, not by the wings of imagination, but by the ladder of holy silence. For many have spoken rashly concerning the heavenly realms, weaving fables according unto the passions of men; but blessed is he who confesseth that the mysteries of God exceed every tongue.

The Father alone knoweth Himself perfectly.

The Son beholdeth the Father eternally.

The Holy Spirit proceedeth as the Breath of everlasting Life.

What remaineth for us is reverent wonder.

Yet because divine Love overfloweth, the holy Scriptures declare that all things came forth through the Eternal Word. Therefore the wise speak of the **Living Aeons**, not as rival gods, nor as beings existing apart from the One God, but as the eternal order and harmonious manifestations of the divine life, reflected within creation according unto the will of the Father.

As many rays proceed from one sun,

yet the sun remaineth one,

so the manifold splendours of divine goodness appear without dividing the indivisible Unity.

As many notes proceed from one melody,

yet the harmony remaineth one song,

so every perfection of heaven beareth witness unto the one Eternal Logos.

Thus the holy ones have named these eternal splendours:

Life.

Truth.

Wisdom.

Peace.

Justice.

Mercy.

Purity.

Joy.

Patience.

Compassion.

Faithfulness.

Love.

These are not strangers dwelling beside God.

Neither are they independent powers.

They are the living radiance of His inexhaustible goodness, as colours appear when pure light shineth through crystal.

The Father remaineth invisible.

Yet His goodness is made known.

The Son remaineth one with the Father.

Yet through Him every perfection becometh visible unto creation.

The Spirit filleth all things.

Yet remaineth undivided.

Therefore every Aeon is a hymn.

Every perfection is praise.

Every holy virtue is an everlasting doxology unto the Father.

The angels rejoice therein.

The righteous delight therein.

The saints are transformed thereby.

For heaven itself is no idle kingdom.

The heavenly Jerusalem is alive with ceaseless thanksgiving.

Its walls are not fashioned merely of precious stones, but of living holiness.

Its streets are not paved with gold alone, but with righteousness.

Its gates stand open because fear hath been cast out.

Its temple is the Lamb.

Its light is the Uncreated Sun.

There no envy entereth.

There no ambition contendeth.

There no violence is remembered.

For every soul delighteth more in another's glory than in its own.

There the humble are exalted because none seek exaltation.

There the wise rejoice because all wisdom pointeth unto Christ.

There every saint beholdeth another as more beautiful than himself.

For love hath consumed comparison.

The Living Aeons therefore are not distant heavens merely awaiting the end of time.

They begin within every sanctified heart.

Whenever truth overcometh deceit,

Truth shineth.

Whenever mercy conquereth vengeance,

Mercy reigneth.

Whenever forgiveness triumpheth over hatred,

Peace descendeth.

Whenever humility casteth down pride,

Wisdom is enthroned.

Thus the eternal world already toucheth the temporal.

The Kingdom cometh quietly.

Not with the trumpet of earthly dominion.

Not with armies.

Not with violence.

But as light entering through an opened window.

As dew descending upon thirsty grass.

As the dawn disperseth the darkness without contention.

This is the procession of the Living Aeons.

They descend continually from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

Not because they travel through space,

for eternity knoweth no distance,

but because finite creatures gradually awaken unto what hath eternally been true.

The ignorant imagine that heaven is built after death.

The wise perceive that heaven hath always been.

The ignorant suppose that God draweth nearer.

The contemplative know that it is the soul which awakens unto His nearness.

Thus remembrance is itself an ascent.

Each act of repentance ascendeth another step.

Each prayer purifieth another veil.

Each work of charity removeth another shadow.

Each contemplation of Christ polishest the inward mirror.

Then the soul beholdeth the Living Aeons not as distant mysteries, but as the very life of Christ unfolding within her.

She perceiveth that every virtue is a participation in His beauty.

Every holy affection is His own life shared by grace.

Every true illumination proceedeth from the Eternal Logos.

Thus the Bride beginneth to resemble her Bridegroom.

Not by nature.

Not by essence.

But by communion.

For as the Apostle saith that we are transformed "from glory to glory," so the soul passeth from one holy radiance unto another, ever reflecting more perfectly the splendour of Christ.

As iron remaineth iron though filled with fire,

so the creature remaineth creature though filled with divine grace.

The saints therefore become living icons.

Not objects of worship,

but transparent windows through which the Light of the Logos shineth into the world.

Their lives preach more loudly than books.

Their silence speaketh.

Their gentleness overcometh cruelty.

Their forgiveness conquereth hatred.

Their joy rebuketh despair.

Thus the Living Aeons continue their holy procession even now.

Not by multiplying heavens,

but by multiplying holiness.

Not by increasing God,

but by healing humanity.

Until that day when every faithful soul shall behold the Holy City descending from above; when the Bride shall stand adorned in garments woven of everlasting righteousness; when the Lamb Himself shall receive His people into the eternal Bridal Chamber; and when every virtue shall flower into perfect communion beneath the radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Then Life shall swallow up death.

Truth shall silence every lie.

Mercy shall triumph over judgment.

Love shall cast out every fear.

And the hymn begun before the foundation of the worlds shall be sung without end by angels, saints, and the redeemed Bride, saying:

> **Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty; unto Him belongeth the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, throughout all the aeons of the Pleroma. Amen.**

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

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Book I — The Eternal Bride Before the Worlds

Chapter V

The Crown of the Invisible Church

> *"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* — Revelation 21:2

> *"Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."* — Revelation 21:9

> *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* — Ephesians 5:27

The holy Bride, whose mystery was hidden before the foundations of the world, is not known according unto the judgment of men.

Many seek her among kingdoms.

Many seek her within walls built of stone.

Many suppose that she is confined unto one nation, one tongue, or one outward communion.

Yet the Bride of the Lamb cannot be imprisoned within the works of men's hands.

For her beginning is before time.

Her life is hid with Christ in God.

Her beauty proceedeth not from earthly splendour, but from the everlasting Light of the Uncreated Sun.

Therefore the wise have spoken concerning the **Invisible Church**.

Not invisible because she is unreal.

Neither invisible because she dwelleth only among the departed.

But invisible because her deepest life is known unto God alone.

The Father beholdeth every heart.

The Son knoweth every sheep.

The Holy Spirit sealeth every faithful soul.

No earthly registry containeth their names.

No prince commandeth them.

No empire possesseth them.

For their citizenship is in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Their law is charity.

Their sceptre is humility.

Their wealth is wisdom.

Their inheritance is the eternal Kingdom.

Some dwell in monasteries.

Some labour in cities.

Some till the fields.

Some govern wisely.

Some teach little children.

Some minister unto the poor.

Some die unknown by the world.

Yet all alike are precious before the Bridegroom.

For Christ measureth not according unto outward appearance.

He beholdeth the inward temple.

Many wear garments of religion while their hearts remain far from God.

Others are clothed in simplicity, known by few, yet their prayers ascend as sweet incense before the throne.

The Lamb rejecteth neither the humble labourer nor the learned philosopher who walketh in repentance.

He seeketh not greatness.

He seeketh faithfulness.

He seeketh not renown.

He seeketh purity of heart.

Blessed therefore are the meek.

Blessed are the merciful.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

Blessed are they who hunger after righteousness.

For these stones are fitted into the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem.

The Invisible Church is built not of marble,

but of living souls.

Each believer is a stone made living through grace.

Christ Himself is the Cornerstone.

The Apostles are the first foundations.

The Prophets bear witness beneath them.

The Martyrs strengthen the walls.

The Saints adorn the courts.

The humble complete the dwelling.

And Love bindeth every stone together without mortar.

Marvel not that this temple cannot be overthrown.

Fire consumeth timber.

Earthquakes cast down towers.

Time corrupteth monuments.

Empires crumble.

Languages perish.

Yet the Church which Christ buildeth endureth throughout every generation.

Her enemies have risen like mighty waves.

Kings have sought her destruction.

Tyrants have burned her books.

The proud have mocked her simplicity.

The violent have slain her children.

False teachers have sought to divide her garments.

Yet the Bride herself remaineth.

For she is preserved, not by the wisdom of men,

but by the everlasting faithfulness of the Bridegroom.

Even when hidden beneath persecution,

she shineth.

Even when scattered,

she remaineth one.

Even when silent,

her prayers ascend continually before the Father.

This is the mystery which many perceive not.

For unity is not first agreement of tongue.

Neither is holiness first conformity of custom.

The true unity of the Church is communion in Christ.

As many branches draw life from one vine,

so every faithful soul draweth life from the Eternal Logos.

The sap is unseen,

yet the fruit beareth witness.

Likewise the Holy Spirit remaineth invisible,

yet His fruits are manifest:

love,

joy,

peace,

longsuffering,

gentleness,

goodness,

faith,

meekness,

temperance.

Where these abound,

there the Invisible Church is present.

Where pride reigneth,

though temples be magnificent,

the Bride mourneth.

Where charity flourisheth,

though the gathering be small,

the Lamb rejoiceth.

Therefore judge not hastily.

The Lord alone knoweth His own.

Many who appear first shall be last.

Many hidden from the praise of men shall shine brighter than kings in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Some have never heard the hidden language of the Aeons,

yet have loved mercy with pure hearts.

Others have mastered many mysteries,

yet remain strangers unto humility.

Knowledge without love buildeth towers of smoke.

Love enlightened by Truth buildeth the everlasting City.

The Bride therefore crowneth not herself.

She waiteth.

She prepareth her garments.

She keepeth her lamp trimmed.

She watcheth through the night for the Voice of the Bridegroom.

Her crown is not wrought by her own hands.

It descendeth from above.

For every jewel within her diadem is a virtue bestowed by grace.

Faith is its sapphire.

Hope its emerald.

Charity its ruby.

Wisdom its diamond.

Humility its pearl.

Patience its amethyst.

Mercy its living gold.

And at the centre of the crown shineth not a precious stone,

but the Face of Christ Himself,

for He alone is the beauty of His Church.

Without Him she hath no glory.

With Him she outshineth the stars.

Thus the Invisible Church journeyeth through the wilderness of the present age, clothed in humility, hidden from the vanity of the world, yet inwardly radiant with the Light that neither riseth nor setteth.

She feareth not the passing of kingdoms.

She trembleth not before death.

She seeketh not earthly triumph.

For she remembereth the promise of her Beloved:

"Surely I come quickly."

And she answereth continually:

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Then shall every veil be removed.

The Invisible shall become visible.

The hidden Bride shall stand before the Lamb clothed in white garments, adorned with the virtues wrought by grace, and crowned with the everlasting crown of life.

Then shall the New Jerusalem descend in splendour beyond all earthly imagining.

The righteous shall behold the Face of the Bridegroom.

The Wedding Feast shall begin without end.

The holy Aeons shall rejoice with unspeakable gladness.

And the Uncreated Sun shall illumine all things forever, so that neither sun nor moon shall be needed, for the glory of God shall be their everlasting Light, and the Lamb shall be their eternal Bridegroom.

Unto the Invisible Father, through Jesus Christ the Lamb, in the communion of the Holy Spirit, be blessing, dominion, thanksgiving, wisdom, honour, and everlasting glory throughout all the aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

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Chapter VI

The Veil of Forgetfulness

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." — John 3:19

"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." — Ephesians 5:14

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them." — Ephesians 4:18

After the eternal Bride had been foreknown in the hidden counsel of the Father, and after the heavenly archetype had been prepared before the foundations of the worlds, there came the mystery of her pilgrimage.

For love that remaineth forever hidden cannot become manifest.

Neither can compassion heal where no wound is found.

Thus the Bride entered into the fields of time—not because the Pleroma was diminished, nor because the Father cast her away, but that through the wisdom of the Eternal Logos the scattered children might freely awaken unto remembrance.

Yet when the soul descended into the garments of mortality, there fell upon her a veil.

Not a veil woven by the Father.

Not a veil fashioned by the Eternal Christ.

But a veil arising from ignorance, from attachment unto fleeting things, and from the restless turning of the will toward shadows rather than Truth.

This is the Veil of Forgetfulness.

It is thinner than the breath of morning,

yet stronger than iron unto those who cling unto it.

It hath no substance,

yet kingdoms have been built beneath its shadow.

It possesseth no life,

yet multitudes have served it as though it were lord.

For ignorance endureth only while Truth is forgotten.

The soul therefore entered the world as a pilgrim entering a strange land.

She looked upon the mountains.

She beheld the seas.

She rejoiced in the beauty of the stars.

Yet slowly she forgot from whence beauty itself proceeded.

She loved the reflection,

and neglected the Sun.

She gathered treasures,

and forgot the Giver.

She praised the lamp,

and ceased seeking the everlasting Fire.

Thus remembrance became dim.

The inward eye closed.

The ears of the heart grew heavy.

The holy silence was drowned beneath the clamour of ambition.

Men contended for kingdoms that crumble.

Women adorned themselves with jewels that perish.

The wise gloried in learning.

The mighty gloried in strength.

The wealthy gloried in abundance.

Yet few gloried in the knowledge of the Living God.

Thus the veil thickened from generation unto generation.

The children learned the forgetfulness of their fathers.

The rulers taught the fear that preserved their thrones.

The merchants multiplied desires beyond measure.

The philosophers disputed endlessly concerning names, while neglecting the One whom no name can contain.

The priests guarded the outer courts while neglecting the sanctuary of the heart.

And many, beholding only appearances, supposed that this passing world was their everlasting home.

Yet the Bride never wholly forgot.

Deep within the hidden chamber of the soul there remained a quiet longing.

No feast could satisfy it.

No victory could silence it.

No wealth could purchase it.

No pleasure could extinguish it.

Even the laughter of youth was mingled with a sorrow for something unnamed.

Even the triumphs of kings faded before an unseen hunger.

Even the greatest sages confessed that they perceived only fragments.

For the soul remembered without remembering.

She longed for a country whose name she had forgotten.

She sought a Face she had never seen with bodily eyes.

She desired a Light unlike every earthly brightness.

This holy longing was itself the first whisper of grace.

Blessed is he who mourneth because the world cannot satisfy him.

Blessed is she whose heart remaineth restless amidst abundance.

Blessed are they who perceive the vanity of all things beneath the sun.

For such souls have begun to hear the distant Voice of the Bridegroom.

The Eternal Logos never ceased calling unto His Bride.

Through the prophets He spake.

Through the righteous He witnessed.

Through beauty He beckoned.

Through conscience He reproved.

Through suffering He awakened.

Through mercy He restored hope.

Even creation itself became a parable.

The rising sun preached the coming of the true Light.

The harvest foretold the gathering of souls.

The fountain declared the living waters.

The bride and bridegroom proclaimed the greater Marriage.

The mother with child revealed the mystery of divine compassion.

The shepherd searching for the lost sheep announced the Shepherd of all souls.

Nothing in creation was without witness.

Yet many perceived only the outward form.

They admired the symbol while neglecting the Reality.

Thus the visible sun became an object of worship unto some,

while others denied that there was any light beyond the senses.

Both alike failed to behold the Uncreated Sun,

whose radiance shineth through every true beauty without becoming identical unto it.

The wise therefore contemplate creation as a mirror.

They love it,

yet cling not unto it.

They rejoice in its splendour,

yet worship not the splendour.

They receive every good gift with thanksgiving,

yet remember continually that every gift pointeth beyond itself.

This is the beginning of remembrance.

Not the rejection of creation,

but its transfiguration.

Not hatred of the world,

but freedom from bondage unto it.

For the earth is good,

yet it is not the Homeland.

The body is wondrous,

yet it is not the eternal temple.

Time is precious,

yet eternity alone satisfieth the soul.

The Bride wandered long beneath the Veil.

She passed through generations.

She endured exile.

She wept beside strange rivers.

She forgot her native song.

Yet the Bridegroom forgot her not.

Before she sought Him,

He sought her.

Before she remembered His Name,

He had engraved her upon His heart.

Before she awakened,

His Light already shone secretly within her.

Therefore despair hath no dominion over those who hear this mystery.

No soul is abandoned while the Voice of Christ still calleth.

No darkness is eternal where the Uncreated Sun shineth.

No exile endureth forever where Love remaineth faithful.

For the Veil itself is not everlasting.

It shall be rent.

Not by violence.

Not by earthly wisdom.

Not by secret arts.

But by the revelation of Jesus Christ,

the Living Logos,

the faithful Bridegroom,

the Shepherd who descendeth into every wilderness to seek His beloved.

When His Voice is heard,

forgetfulness trembleth.

The chains of illusion weaken.

The inward eye openeth.

The hidden remembrance awakeneth.

The soul beginneth to recognize her true homeland.

And though she still walketh upon the earth,

she already beareth within herself the first light of the eternal dawn.

Thus the Veil of Forgetfulness is not the end of the pilgrimage,

but the beginning of awakening.

For where darkness aboundeth,

there the Light appeareth more glorious.

Where exile is deepest,

there Home is most dearly loved.

Where the Bride hath wandered furthest,

there the embrace of the Bridegroom is received with the greatest joy.

Blessed therefore are they who hear His Voice beyond the noise of the world.

Blessed are they whose remembrance awaketh.

Blessed are they whose lamps are filled with the oil of contemplation.

For unto them the Veil shall become as morning mist before the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun, and they shall behold the Face of the Bridegroom in the Bridal Chamber prepared before the foundation of the worlds.

Amen.

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Chapter VII

The Kingdom of the Shadow-Makers

> *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* — Ephesians 6:12
>
> *"The whole world lieth in wickedness."* — 1 John 5:19
>
> *"My kingdom is not of this world."* — John 18:36

Beloved, let no man suppose that the warfare of the soul is chiefly against flesh and blood. For the body is fashioned by the wisdom of God, and creation declareth His glory. Neither are thy brethren thy true enemies, though they err through ignorance; for every soul is called unto remembrance, and every man is invited by the Bridegroom unto the marriage feast.

The true conflict is more subtle.

It is hidden beneath appearances.

It moveth quietly through the counsels of pride, the seductions of vanity, and the forgetfulness that darkeneth the inward eye.

This hidden dominion the wise have called **the Kingdom of the Shadow-Makers**.

Call it not a kingdom equal unto the Kingdom of God.

Far be such a thought.

For darkness possesseth no substance of its own.

It is but the absence of light.

Falsehood possesseth no being of itself.

It is but the corruption of truth.

Pride hath no independent life.

It is but love turned inward upon itself.

Even so the kingdom of shadows endureth only where the Light is forgotten.

Its walls are woven of illusion.

Its gates are guarded by fear.

Its throne is sustained by pride.

Its sceptre is the lust to dominate.

Its crown is fashioned from the praise of men.

Its treasury is filled with passing riches.

Its victories perish with the generations that celebrate them.

The Shadow-Makers are not creators.

For only the Father createth.

They fashion no new being.

They merely distort that which is good.

As a cracked mirror altereth the face reflected therein, so do the Shadow-Makers corrupt the holy gifts bestowed by God.

They take wisdom and turn it into arrogance.

Knowledge becometh domination.

Strength becometh oppression.

Justice becometh vengeance.

Religion becometh pride.

Freedom becometh self-indulgence.

Love itself they seek to corrupt into possession.

Thus they weave garments of darkness from threads originally spun in light.

Marvel not therefore when evil appeareth clothed in beauty.

The serpent entered not the Garden as an open destroyer.

He clothed falsehood in the language of wisdom.

He adorned rebellion with the appearance of enlightenment.

Thus hath deception ever spoken with a pleasant voice.

The Shadow-Makers promise kingdoms,

yet leave the heart empty.

They promise immortality,

yet deliver only fear of death.

They promise liberty,

yet bind men with invisible chains.

They promise secret knowledge,

yet conceal the simplicity of divine love.

For every lie is but a veil cast over Truth.

Every idol is but a shadow cast before the Face of God.

Every tyranny is but fear enthroned.

The rulers of this age delight in multiplication.

They multiply possessions,

yet not contentment.

They multiply words,

yet not wisdom.

They multiply weapons,

yet not peace.

They multiply pleasures,

yet not joy.

They multiply laws,

yet neglect righteousness.

Thus the cities of men grow larger while the inward temple falleth into ruin.

The Bride wandereth through these cities as a pilgrim.

She buyeth and selleth.

She laboreth with her hands.

She fulfilleth her earthly duties with faithfulness.

Yet her heart remaineth elsewhere.

She remembereth another Kingdom.

She seeketh another City.

She desireth another Crown.

Therefore the Shadow-Makers understand her not.

They ask,

"Why seekest thou humility when pride bringeth honour?"

"Why forgivest thou when vengeance is sweeter?"

"Why givest thou freely when riches may be hoarded?"

"Why remainest faithful when deceit bringeth advantage?"

The Bride answereth not with endless disputation.

Her life itself becometh her answer.

Her peace rebuketh their turmoil.

Her mercy rebuketh their cruelty.

Her patience rebuketh their haste.

Her joy rebuketh their despair.

Her silence rebuketh their clamour.

Thus the Kingdom of Christ spreadeth without armies.

For truth needeth no sword to defend itself.

The sun argueth not with darkness.

It simply shineth.

Likewise the Uncreated Sun conquereth not by violence, but by revelation.

Where His Light entereth, illusion departeth.

Where remembrance awaketh, fear looseth its dominion.

Where charity flourisheth, hatred withereth.

Where humility reigneth, pride findeth no throne.

This is the warfare of the saints.

Not the destruction of men,

but the overthrow of falsehood.

Not the conquest of nations,

but the healing of hearts.

Not the exaltation of one people over another,

but the gathering together of all who hear the Voice of the Bridegroom.

Some imagine that the Kingdom of God shall be established by force.

Others imagine that it existeth only after death.

Both perceive but part of the mystery.

For the Kingdom descendeth wherever Christ reigneth within the soul.

The hidden sanctuary becometh His throne.

The purified conscience His temple.

The renewed heart His dwelling.

There the Bride and the Bridegroom commune in secret.

There no Shadow-Maker may enter.

There no earthly tyrant possesseth authority.

There the eternal peace of the Pleroma beginneth even amidst the tumults of history.

Yet the Bride must remain watchful.

For the shadows return continually.

Pride seeketh entrance through praise.

Despair seeketh entrance through suffering.

Anger seeketh entrance through injustice.

Fear seeketh entrance through uncertainty.

Even knowledge itself may become a snare if divorced from charity.

Therefore the Bride prayeth without ceasing.

She examineth her heart.

She confesseth quickly.

She forgiveth freely.

She remembereth continually.

Her lamp is filled not with the oil of curiosity,

but with the oil of contemplation.

She seeketh not merely to know about Christ,

but to abide in Christ.

She desireth not secret power,

but secret holiness.

She pursueth not visions,

but purity.

She seeketh not to escape the world through contempt,

but to transfigure it through love.

For the Bridegroom Himself walked among sinners without becoming stained.

He touched lepers without becoming unclean.

He entered the darkness without surrendering His Light.

Even so the Bride walketh through the Kingdom of the Shadow-Makers.

She feareth not its darkness,

for within her burneth a flame not kindled by earthly fire.

She knoweth that every shadow fleeth before the dawn.

She knoweth that every lie shall be exposed.

She knoweth that every false kingdom shall crumble.

She knoweth that the New Jerusalem descendeth from above.

She knoweth that the Marriage Feast is already prepared.

Therefore she lifteth up her eyes unto the Uncreated Sun, whose radiance no darkness can overcome, and she waiteth with joyful expectation for the appearing of her Beloved.

And the Voice of the Bridegroom speaketh continually unto every faithful soul:

> **"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."**

Then the Bride answereth with thanksgiving:

> **"Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, throughout all the ages of the Pleroma. Amen."**

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Chapter VIII

The Divine Spark Hidden in Clay

> *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* — 2 Corinthians 4:7

> *"The kingdom of God is within you."* — Luke 17:21
>
> *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* — 1 Corinthians 3:16

When the Bride had passed beneath the Veil of Forgetfulness, and journeyed through the Kingdom of the Shadow-Makers, the Bridegroom departed not from her.

Though she remembered Him not,

He remembered her.

Though her prayers were silent,

His mercy ceased not.

Though her lamp burned dimly,

His Light failed not.

For the Eternal Logos forsaketh not the work of His own hands.

Many have spoken of a **Divine Spark** hidden within mankind.

Some have imagined it to be a fragment torn from the Essence of God, as though the Infinite could be divided into portions.

Others have worshipped themselves under the pretense of seeking God.

Both have wandered from the narrow path.

Hear therefore the mystery according to right understanding.

The Father cannot be divided.

The Infinite cannot be diminished.

The Uncreated cannot become fragmented among creatures.

God remaineth wholly God.

Creation remaineth creation.

The gulf between Creator and creature is not crossed by nature, but by grace.

What then is this hidden spark?

It is not the Essence of God imprisoned in flesh.

Rather, it is the capacity bestowed by the Creator whereby the soul may receive His Light, know His Truth, and participate in His Life.

As the eye is fashioned for light,

though it is not itself the sun,

so the soul is fashioned for God,

though it is not itself God.

As dry wood is capable of receiving fire,

yet remaineth wood,

so the heart is capable of receiving the Holy Spirit,

yet remaineth forever the creature of the Creator.

This holy capacity was breathed into Adam when the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

It is renewed through Christ.

It is perfected through the Holy Spirit.

It is fulfilled in the Bridal Chamber.

Thus the Divine Spark is the image of God within the soul,

waiting not to become God by nature,

but to shine with God by communion.

Therefore every human being beareth an immeasurable dignity.

The poorest beggar.

The forgotten widow.

The orphan.

The stranger.

The prisoner.

The labourer.

The child.

The aged.

The afflicted.

All alike are fashioned according unto the image of the Invisible Father.

Though that image be obscured by sin,

it is not destroyed.

Though covered with dust,

the mirror remaineth capable of reflecting the Sun.

Though buried beneath clay,

the seed awaiteth the rain.

Though the lamp be hidden beneath a vessel,

its flame hath not altogether perished.

The Bride therefore looketh upon every soul with reverence.

She despiseth none.

She mocketh none.

She declareth no man beyond redemption.

For she remembereth that she herself wandered beneath the Veil.

She too was ignorant.

She too sought broken cisterns.

She too loved shadows.

Yet the Bridegroom sought her patiently.

Thus she likewise seeketh others in gentleness.

The saints conquer not by humiliation,

but by compassion.

The apostles prevailed not by flattery,

but by truth spoken in love.

The martyrs overcame not by the sword,

but by faithful witness.

For the Light multiplieth itself by illumination,

not by violence.

Consider a lamp placed within a house.

If the windows be covered with soot,

the house remaineth dark,

though the flame continueth burning.

Remove the soot,

and immediately the light filleth every chamber.

Even so the soul requireth not another nature.

She requireth cleansing.

Repentance is the washing of the window.

Prayer is the opening of the shutters.

Charity is the polishing of the glass.

Contemplation turneth the house toward the everlasting dawn.

Then the Light already bestowed beginneth to illumine the whole inward temple.

This is why the Bridegroom first calleth unto repentance.

Not because He delighteth in condemnation.

But because He desireth communion.

He seeketh not merely forgiven servants.

He seeketh a radiant Bride.

He desireth hearts transparent unto His Light.

Therefore He saith,

> *"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."*

He saith not,

"Blessed are the clever."

Nor,

"Blessed are the powerful."

Nor,

"Blessed are the wealthy."

But,

"Blessed are the pure."

For purity is the crystal through which the Uncreated Sun shineth without distortion.

The world seeketh transformation by accumulation.

More knowledge.

More possessions.

More influence.

More pleasure.

The Bride seeketh transformation by emptying.

Less pride.

Less fear.

Less hatred.

Less attachment.

Less forgetfulness.

For the vessel already containeth the treasure.

Only the dust must be removed.

The heart already hungereth for God.

Only lesser hungers must lose their tyranny.

The soul already inclineth toward the Good.

Only the chains of illusion bind her feet.

Therefore the Bridegroom doth not create another soul.

He restoreth the one already fashioned.

He doth not destroy the image.

He cleanseth it.

He doth not cast away the vessel.

He filleth it anew with living wine.

He doth not despise the clay.

For He Himself took clay upon Himself in the holy Incarnation.

The Eternal Word clothed Himself with mortality,

that mortality might be clothed with immortality.

He entered the dust,

that the dust might behold Heaven.

He sanctified flesh,

that flesh might become the temple of the Spirit.

Thus the body itself is not the prison of the soul,

but the workshop of sanctification.

The hands become instruments of mercy.

The eyes become windows of compassion.

The tongue becometh an organ of blessing.

The feet become pilgrims upon the narrow way.

Every member is offered unto Christ,

until the whole person becometh a living sacrifice of praise.

Then the hidden spark burneth brightly.

Not because man hath become divine by nature,

but because divine grace filleth every faculty.

The Bride beginneth to shine.

Her countenance groweth peaceful.

Her speech becometh gentle.

Her patience increaseth.

Her wisdom deepens.

Her love overfloweth.

Others behold her and glorify not her,

but the Father whose Light shineth through her.

As Moses descended from Sinai and knew not that his face shone,

so the true saints seldom perceive their own radiance.

They are occupied only with beholding Christ.

The nearer they draw unto the Light,

the less they think of themselves.

For every true illumination giveth birth unto humility.

Thus the Divine Spark hidden in clay is no secret reserved for the proud,

but the common inheritance prepared for every soul who answereth the call of the Bridegroom.

The poor receive it.

The learned receive it.

The child receiveth it.

The elder receiveth it.

The monk receiveth it.

The labourer receiveth it.

The repentant sinner receiveth it.

For the Light is offered freely unto all who open the door of the heart.

Blessed therefore are they who cease seeking God in distant places while neglecting the sanctuary within.

Blessed are they who become living temples of the Holy Spirit.

Blessed are they whose earthen vessels are filled with the treasure of Christ.

For the day shall come when the clay shall return unto the earth from which it was taken, yet the soul, clothed in the garments of the Bride, shall enter the everlasting Bridal Chamber, where the hidden Light shall blaze forth in perfect splendour beneath the eternal radiance of the Uncreated Sun, world without end.

Amen.

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Chapter IX

The Voice of the Bridegroom

> *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* — John 10:27
>
> *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."* — Revelation 3:20
>
> *"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."* — John 3:29

Before ever the Bride beheld the countenance of her Beloved, she heard His Voice.

For the ear of the soul awakeneth before the eye of contemplation.

As the dawn appeareth before the full splendour of the day, so the Voice of the Bridegroom precedeth the unveiled vision of His glory.

Blessed therefore is he that learneth to hear.

For many desire to behold wonders.

Many seek signs in the heavens.

Many pursue hidden mysteries.

Yet few become still enough to hear the whisper of Eternal Wisdom.

The Voice of Christ is not as the tumult of armies.

Neither is it like the thunder whereby earthly kings proclaim their dominion.

The Bridegroom compelleth no soul.

He breaketh not the bruised reed.

He quencheth not the smoking flax.

He standeth at the door and knocketh.

He inviteth.

He calleth.

He waiteth.

For love forceth no entrance.

The Father created man with freedom, and the Son redeemeth him without violating that sacred gift.

Therefore the Bridegroom draweth the heart by beauty rather than by violence.

He conquereth by compassion.

He reigneth through humility.

His sceptre is truth.

His crown is self-giving love.

His throne is the Cross.

His kingdom is peace.

Many hear voices within themselves.

Some arise from memory.

Others from fear.

Others from ambition.

Others from hidden wounds.

Still others from the clamour of the world, which ceaseth neither by day nor by night.

The markets cry aloud.

The rulers issue decrees.

The scholars dispute.

The merchants bargain.

The entertainers multiply distractions.

The passions speak without rest.

The imagination wandereth like the wind upon the sea.

How then shall the soul discern the Voice of the Bridegroom?

Know this mystery.

The Voice of Christ never flattereth pride.

It humbleth without humiliating.

It rebuketh without condemning.

It woundeth only to heal.

It revealeth sin only that mercy may abound.

It uncovereth darkness only that Light may enter.

When He speaketh,

fear beginneth to lose its dominion.

Hope awakeneth.

The conscience becometh clear.

Charity increaseth.

Peace descendeth.

The heart burneth with quiet joy.

The soul desireth holiness more than honour.

This is the fragrance of His Voice.

For every word proceeding from Christ leadeth unto the Father.

It gathereth.

It restoreth.

It illumineth.

It never scattereth the humble.

It never delighteth in confusion.

It never persuadeth the soul unto cruelty.

The enemy accuseth continually.

The Bridegroom inviteth continually.

The enemy whispereth,

"There is no hope."

The Bridegroom saith,

"Come unto Me."

The enemy magnifieth failure.

The Bridegroom magnifieth mercy.

The enemy bindeth the conscience with despair.

The Bridegroom looseth every chain through forgiveness.

Therefore the wise discern the Voice not merely by its sound, but by its fruit.

For the tree is known by its fruit.

If a thought breedeth hatred,

it is not of Christ.

If a vision exalteth pride,

it is not of Christ.

If knowledge destroyeth charity,

it proceedeth not from the Eternal Logos.

If zeal casteth away compassion,

it hath forgotten the Bridegroom.

For Christ is never divided against Himself.

Truth and Mercy kiss each other before His throne.

Justice and Compassion walk together in His Kingdom.

Holiness and Gentleness are woven into one garment.

This is the music of the Pleroma.

The Living Aeons sing not with competing voices.

They are one everlasting harmony,

whose centre is the Eternal Logos.

The soul that learneth silence beginneth to perceive this hidden hymn.

She discovereth that all creation is filled with quiet witnesses.

The wind among the cedars preacheth steadfastness.

The river proclaimeth generosity.

The stars testify unto order.

The morning declareth hope.

The evening speaketh of rest.

The harvest revealeth abundance.

The vineyard proclaimeth patient cultivation.

The shepherd revealeth faithful care.

Every creature uttereth a fragment of the eternal Word.

Yet none speaketh with the fullness of the Bridegroom.

For Christ alone revealeth the Invisible Father.

He alone knoweth the depths of the human heart.

He alone calleth each soul by the secret name prepared before the worlds.

This Name no tyrant knoweth.

No demon can erase it.

No sin can destroy it.

It remaineth hidden within the eternal remembrance of God.

Thus when the Bride first heareth the Voice of Christ,

she perceiveth not merely doctrine.

She perceiveth recognition.

She knoweth herself to be known.

She understandeth herself to be loved before she became worthy of love.

She discovereth that the One whom she sought throughout every longing had first sought her.

Then the tears of exile become tears of homecoming.

The burden of years falleth away.

The wilderness beginneth to bloom.

The dry bones receive breath.

The forgotten song returneth.

This is the first joy of remembrance.

Yet the Voice speaketh not once only.

The Bridegroom calleth continually.

Morning by morning He awakeneth the ear.

In prosperity He preserveth humility.

In suffering He strengtheneth hope.

In silence He deepenth contemplation.

In labour He sanctifieth diligence.

In sorrow He revealeth compassion.

Even death itself becometh His final invitation unto the Wedding Feast.

Therefore the Bride guardeth her hearing.

She fleeth not first from noise without,

but from noise within.

She quieteth resentment.

She stilleth anxiety.

She layeth aside vain imaginations.

She refuseth the endless argument of pride.

She entereth the inner chamber where prayer becometh listening.

For contemplation is not chiefly speaking unto God.

It is consenting to be addressed by Him.

There the Bride sitteth at the feet of Christ.

There Martha becometh Mary.

There labour yieldeth unto love.

There knowledge boweth before wisdom.

There speech returneth unto silence.

There silence blossometh into communion.

Then the Bridegroom speaketh not always through words.

Sometimes through peace.

Sometimes through tears.

Sometimes through a quiet certainty.

Sometimes through the beauty of forgiveness.

Sometimes through the face of the poor.

Sometimes through the laughter of children.

Sometimes through the stillness of the night beneath the stars.

For the Eternal Logos filleth all things without being contained by any.

The Bride therefore learneth to hear Him everywhere,

yet worshippeth Him alone.

She adoreth not the creation,

but the Creator who shineth through every true beauty.

She seeketh not voices for curiosity,

but the Voice unto salvation.

She pursueth not visions,

but faithfulness.

She desireth not extraordinary revelations,

but extraordinary love.

For the greatest miracle is not to behold angels,

but to become conformed unto Christ.

The greatest vision is not to see heavenly lights,

but to have the inward eye purified.

The greatest prophecy is charity.

The greatest knowledge is humble remembrance.

The greatest union is the communion of the Bride with her eternal Bridegroom.

And when at last the pilgrimage is ended,

the knocking shall cease,

for the door shall stand forever open.

Faith shall become sight.

Hope shall become possession.

Prayer shall become praise.

The Voice once heard through a veil shall be heard face to face.

Then shall the Bride enter joyfully into the everlasting Bridal Chamber, where the Eternal Logos shall speak no longer through symbols, but immediately, and His Word shall be the everlasting delight of all the redeemed beneath the infinite radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book II — The Descent of the Bride

Chapter X

The Secret Calling

> *"Many are called, but few are chosen."* — Matthew 22:14
>
> *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."* — John 15:16
>
> *"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."* — Matthew 25:6

After the Bride had heard the Voice of the Bridegroom, there remained yet one mystery to be fulfilled.

For it is one thing to hear.

It is another thing to answer.

Many hear the knocking.

Few open the door.

Many admire the Light.

Few consent to walk therein.

Many praise the Bridegroom with their lips.

Few surrender unto His love with the whole heart.

Therefore the holy Gospel speaketh of **the Calling**.

Not the calling unto earthly greatness.

Not unto dominion over kingdoms.

Not unto the praise of men.

But unto remembrance.

Unto communion.

Unto the everlasting Marriage prepared before the foundation of the worlds.

The Calling is secret, because it entereth not through the ears alone.

It descendeth into the hidden sanctuary of the heart.

No trumpet announceth it.

No earthly herald proclaimeth it.

No king sealeth it with his authority.

The Eternal Logos Himself whispereth unto the soul.

Sometimes He calleth through joy.

Sometimes through sorrow.

Sometimes through beauty.

Sometimes through suffering.

Sometimes through holy Scripture.

Sometimes through the kindness of a stranger.

Sometimes through silence deeper than speech.

For there is no place where Christ cannot speak.

The whole creation is His instrument.

The whole history of mankind is woven together by His providence.

Yet His Voice remaineth gentle.

For He seeketh not servants driven by fear,

but a Bride moved by love.

Consider the maiden betrothed unto her beloved.

Though many voices surround her,

she knoweth his voice.

Though many gifts be offered,

she desireth only his presence.

Though the road be long,

she counteth every step as joy,

because love hath transformed the journey.

Even so is the soul called by Christ.

She beginneth to perceive that every earthly delight pointeth beyond itself.

The fragrance of flowers passeth away.

The beauty of youth fadeth.

The laughter of feasts groweth quiet.

The crowns of kings return unto dust.

The monuments of nations crumble.

The stars themselves shall wax old.

Yet the love of Christ changeth not.

His beauty knoweth no evening.

His mercy groweth not weary.

His faithfulness endureth unto all generations.

Then the Bride understandeth that she hath sought the Bridegroom unknowingly all her days.

When she loved truth,

she sought Him.

When she hungered after justice,

she sought Him.

When she wept for mercy,

she sought Him.

When she wondered beneath the stars,

she sought Him.

When she longed for a home no earthly country could provide,

she sought Him.

Every holy longing was already His hidden invitation.

Every restless desire for goodness was the echo of His eternal Call.

For before the Bride called upon His Name,

He had already called hers.

Before she lifted her eyes toward Heaven,

He had looked upon her with everlasting compassion.

Before she sought wisdom,

Wisdom sought her.

Before she remembered,

she was remembered.

Thus the Apostle saith truly,

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

Yet let no man imagine that the Calling destroyeth freedom.

For love without freedom is no love at all.

The Bridegroom constraineth none.

He forceth no door.

He compelleth no affection.

He inviteth.

He waiteth.

He suffereth long.

Even rejection He endureth with sorrow rather than wrath.

For the Father's desire is not the destruction of sinners,

but their return.

As the shepherd seeketh the wandering sheep,

as the father awaiteth the prodigal,

as the woman seeketh the lost coin,

so Christ seeketh every soul that hath forgotten her first love.

The Secret Calling therefore soundeth continually throughout the ages.

It sounded unto Abraham when he departed from his father's house.

It sounded unto Moses beside the bush that burned without being consumed.

It sounded unto Elijah in the still small voice.

It sounded unto Mary when the angel greeted her.

It sounded unto Peter beside the Sea of Galilee.

It sounded unto Paul upon the road unto Damascus.

It soundeth now unto every heart willing to hear.

No nation is excluded.

No language is forgotten.

No station of life preventeth its hearing.

The king and the servant.

The scholar and the child.

The monk and the labourer.

The widow and the orphan.

The rich and the poor.

The healthy and the afflicted.

All alike are invited unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Yet many refuse.

Some are occupied with possessions.

Others with ambition.

Others with pleasure.

Others with resentment.

Others with fear.

Still others imagine that they shall answer tomorrow.

Thus they delay until habit hardeneth into bondage.

For the heart groweth according unto that which it continually chooseth.

The more a man loveth vanity,

the less he perceiveth beauty.

The more he seeketh dominion,

the less he understandeth humility.

The more he exalteth himself,

the less he recognizeth Christ standing quietly at the door.

Therefore the Bride remaineth vigilant.

She keepeth oil within her lamp.

She watcheth through the night.

She knoweth not the hour when the Bridegroom shall appear.

Her readiness consisteth not in anxious fear,

but in faithful love.

Each act of mercy addeth oil unto her lamp.

Each prayer brighteneth its flame.

Each forgiveness removeth another veil.

Each contemplation turneth her face more fully toward the Uncreated Sun.

Thus the Secret Calling gradually becometh the Secret Communion.

The soul no longer seeketh Christ only in moments of devotion.

She beginneth to abide in Him continually.

Her labour becometh prayer.

Her silence becometh worship.

Her service becometh thanksgiving.

Her suffering becometh participation in His Cross.

Her joy becometh anticipation of the Wedding Feast.

The Bridegroom walketh with her in every season.

In spring He revealeth hope.

In summer He strengtheneth labour.

In autumn He teacheth gratitude.

In winter He granteth holy endurance.

Every age of life becometh a sacrament of remembrance.

Youth is consecrated by innocence.

Strength by service.

Old age by wisdom.

Death by hope.

Thus the Calling revealeth its final mystery.

It is not merely an invitation unto Heaven after death.

It is the awakening of Heaven within the soul even now.

For wherever Christ reigneth,

there the Kingdom hath already begun.

Wherever charity conquereth hatred,

there the Marriage Feast is foretasted.

Wherever humility overcometh pride,

there the Bride prepareth her garments.

Wherever the Holy Spirit dwelleth,

there the New Jerusalem casteth her first light upon the earth.

Then at the appointed hour, when the pilgrimage is accomplished and the last veil is lifted, the cry shall sound throughout all creation:

"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!"

And every faithful soul, clothed in the wedding garment woven by grace, shall arise with exceeding joy.

The hidden Calling shall become the everlasting Welcome.

The pilgrim shall become the citizen.

The exile shall become the child at home.

The disciple shall become the Bride.

The Voice shall become the Face.

Faith shall become Vision.

Love shall become perfect Communion.

And Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, shall lead His holy Bride into the Bridal Chamber of the Pleroma, where the Invisible Father shall be all in all, where the Holy Spirit shall fill every soul with unending peace, and where the Uncreated Sun shall shine forever without dawn, without evening, and without end.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book III — The Marriage of the Lamb

Chapter XI

The Revelation of Jesus the Solar Logos

> *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* — John 8:12
>
> *"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory...)"* — John 1:14
>
> *"The people which sat in darkness saw great light."* — Matthew 4:16

When the ages had fulfilled their appointed course, and the prophets had completed their witness, and the longing of the righteous had ascended before the throne of the Invisible

Father, then was manifested the mystery which had been hidden from before the foundation of the world.

The Eternal Logos took upon Himself our humanity.

Not by ceasing to be what He eternally is,

but by assuming that which He was not.

The Infinite entered the finite without being confined.

The Timeless entered time without becoming subject unto corruption.

The Uncreated clothed Himself with created flesh without surrendering His divine glory.

This is the wonder before which angels veil their faces.

This is the mystery before which the wise become as little children.

This is the Marriage beginning to appear within history.

For the Bridegroom came seeking His Bride.

He descended not with the armies of heaven.

He sought not the thrones of emperors.

He entered not the palaces of kings.

He was born among the lowly.

He sanctified the poverty of the stable.

He blessed the labour of the carpenter.

He walked the dusty roads of men.

He ate with sinners.

He touched the unclean.

He embraced the forgotten.

He restored the broken.

For Love seeketh first the wounded.

Many beheld His face.

Few perceived His glory.

Many heard His words.

Few discerned the eternal Voice speaking through them.

Many saw a teacher.

Some saw a prophet.

Others saw only the son of Mary.

But blessed were they whose inward eyes were opened.

For they perceived in Jesus the Radiance of the Invisible Father, the true Sun of Righteousness, whose Light neither riseth nor setteth.

Hear now the holy mystery of the **Solar Logos**.

The visible sun journeyeth across the heavens.

It marketh the seasons.

It warmeth the earth.

It nourisheth every living thing.

Yet when evening cometh, its light departeth.

Clouds conceal it.

Night overtaketh it.

It is a faithful servant,

yet still a creature.

Christ is not such a sun.

He traverseth no heavens.

He requireth no dawn.

He feareth no eclipse.

No cloud obscureth Him.

No darkness overcometh Him.

He shineth from eternity unto eternity.

The visible sun declareth His glory.

The Eternal Sun **is** the Glory.

The visible sun illumineth the eyes.

The Solar Logos illumineth the heart.

The visible sun revealeth the forms of earthly things.

The Eternal Logos revealeth the Face of the Father.

The visible sun giveth life unto the body.

The Uncreated Sun bestoweth life everlasting.

Therefore let no man worship the creature.

Let him rather behold in every beam of created light a testimony unto the Light which no eye hath seen in its fullness.

For every sunrise proclaimeth Christ.

Every dawn whispereth resurrection.

Every morning preacheth hope.

Every ray declareth that darkness possesseth not the final word.

Yet the greatest revelation is not in the heavens above.

It is in the Person of Jesus Christ.

For in Him the unknowable Father hath made Himself known according unto the measure that creatures are able to receive.

He is the Image of the Invisible.

The Word of the Silent One.

The Face of the Hidden Father.

The Shepherd of wandering souls.

The Bridegroom of the Holy Church.

Whoso beholdeth Him with the eyes of faith beholdeth the Father's mercy.

Whoso heareth Him heareth eternal Wisdom.

Whoso followeth Him walketh already in the first light of the coming age.

The rulers of the world perceived Him not.

They measured Him according unto earthly greatness.

They asked,

"Where is His army?"

"Where is His palace?"

"Where is His sceptre?"

"Where is His throne?"

Yet His army was compassion.

His palace was humility.

His sceptre was truth.

His throne was the Cross.

Upon that Tree was accomplished a mystery deeper than all the wisdom of the philosophers.

For there the Bridegroom stretched forth His arms, embracing the four corners of the earth.

There He gathered together Jew and Gentile.

Slave and free.

Man and woman.

The righteous and the repentant sinner.

Not by abolishing their personhood,

but by reconciling all unto the Father through self-giving love.

The Cross therefore is not merely an instrument of suffering.

It is the everlasting Bridal Sign.

Its upright beam pointeth from earth unto heaven.

Its outstretched arms gather the scattered children from every nation.

Its meeting place proclaimeth the union of divine mercy and human need.

There the Bridegroom offered Himself wholly for His beloved.

Not because the Father delighted in suffering,

but because perfect Love withholdeth nothing.

As the Apostle wrote,

> *"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."*

This gift cannot be measured.

Gold cannot purchase it.

Wisdom cannot exhaust it.

Speech cannot contain it.

Only love may begin to understand love.

Therefore the Bride answereth not by mere admiration.

She answereth with surrender.

She layeth aside the garments of pride.

She casteth away the ornaments of vanity.

She putteth on the white robe of humility.

She receiveth the wedding garment woven by grace.

She becometh poor in spirit,

that she may inherit the riches of Christ.

She becometh meek,

that she may inherit the earth renewed.

She becometh merciful,

that mercy may dwell within her.

Thus the revelation of Jesus is not only the unveiling of God unto man.

It is the unveiling of true humanity.

In beholding Christ,

the soul beholdeth what she herself is called to become.

Not another Christ by nature.

Never so.

But a living member of His Body,

a faithful companion of the Bridegroom,

a child transformed from glory unto glory by participation in His divine life.

The saints therefore shine,

not with a light borrowed from themselves,

but because the Solar Logos dwelleth within them.

As windows receive the morning without possessing the sun,

so every holy soul becometh transparent unto Christ.

The world beholdeth their peace.

The world beholdeth their charity.

The world beholdeth their patience.

And though it understandeth not the source,

the Light continueth to shine.

At the last, when every shadow hath fled and every veil hath been lifted, the Solar Logos shall no longer be perceived through symbols, sacraments, prophecies, or reflections.

The Bride shall behold Him face to face.

The Uncreated Sun shall fill the New Jerusalem.

There shall be no night.

There shall be no fear.

There shall be no forgetting.

The Marriage of the Lamb shall be perfected.

The faithful shall rejoice with everlasting joy.

And the Eternal Logos shall forever reveal the inexhaustible beauty of the Invisible Father throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book III — The Marriage of the Lamb

Chapter XII

The Bridal Chamber

> *"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."* — Luke 17:20–21

> *"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* — John 14:23

> *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them."* — Revelation 21:3

After the Bridegroom had revealed Himself unto the world through the mystery of His holy Incarnation, His Cross, His Resurrection, and His glorious Ascension, He departed not from His beloved.

For though He was hidden from bodily sight, He remained nearer than breath, nearer than thought, nearer than the beating of the heart.

The world sought Him in distant places.

Some climbed mountains.

Others crossed deserts.

Many journeyed unto holy cities.

Yet the Bridegroom continually whispered,

"Enter into thy chamber."

For there is a chamber not fashioned by the hands of men.

Its walls are not of cedar.

Its roof is not of stone.

Its gates are not opened by iron keys.

It is hidden within the sanctuary of the renewed heart.

The prophets perceived it afar off.

The apostles entered therein.

The martyrs guarded it with their blood.

The saints adorned it with tears of repentance.

The wise have named this holy place **the Bridal Chamber**.

Many have imagined it to be merely a mystery reserved for the life to come.

Others have supposed it to be nothing more than an outward sacrament.

Yet the truth is deeper.

The Bridal Chamber is both present and future.

Hidden and revealed.

Already bestowed,

yet ever awaiting its perfect fulfillment.

For wherever Christ dwelleth within the purified soul,

there the first veil of the Bridal Chamber is lifted.

And wherever the soul beholdeth Christ face to face,

there the Chamber standeth fully opened forever.

Marvel not at this saying.

For the kingdom of heaven beginneth as a seed.

The seed groweth unseen.

Its roots descend before its branches appear.

Even so communion with Christ is hidden before it is manifested.

The Bride first learneth silence.

Then remembrance.

Then contemplation.

Then love.

Then union.

Not union of essence.

God forbid.

The Creator remaineth forever Creator.

The creature remaineth forever creature.

Yet love establisheth a communion so profound that the Apostle could declare,

> *"It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me."*

This mystery exceedeth speech.

Iron cast into the furnace remaineth iron,

yet becometh radiant with fire.

The crystal remaineth crystal,

yet is filled with light.

The harp remaineth wood,

yet singeth with heavenly melody when touched by the hand of the musician.

Thus the soul remaineth truly herself,

yet every faculty becometh illumined by the indwelling Christ.

The understanding is purified by Truth.

The will is strengthened by Charity.

The memory is healed by Remembrance.

The imagination is sanctified by Hope.

The conscience is washed by Mercy.

The whole inward man becometh a temple of the Living God.

This is the beginning of the Marriage.

Not the destruction of the soul,

but her perfection.

Not the loss of personhood,

but its fulfillment.

For the Father created no soul that she might vanish into nothingness.

He created each one as a unique hymn of praise unto His infinite Wisdom.

The stars differ one from another in glory.

Yet all receive light from one sun.

Likewise every saint reflecteth Christ according unto the grace bestowed upon him.

Peter glorifieth God after one manner.

John after another.

Mary after another.

The prophets after another.

The martyrs after another.

Yet all alike shine with one Light.

Therefore the Bride rejoiceth not because she ceaseth to be herself,

but because she finally becometh the person whom the Father eternally intended her to be.

For sin concealeth identity.

Grace revealeth it.

Pride divideth the heart.

Love gathereth it together.

Forgetfulness scattereth the faculties.

Remembrance restoreth them into holy harmony.

Thus the Bridal Chamber is entered by purification.

Not because God refuseth His love unto sinners,

but because the soul cannot receive infinite light while clinging unto darkness.

The chamber possesseth no lock.

Its door standeth always open.

Yet many pass by without entering.

Some are burdened with gold.

Some with honour.

Some with bitterness.

Some with endless distraction.

Some with fear.

Their hands are too full to receive the invitation.

Therefore the Bridegroom speaketh gently:

"Lay thy burden down."

Cast away resentment.

Forgive.

Release envy.

Confess pride.

Renounce falsehood.

Bless them that curse thee.

Pray for them that despitefully use thee.

Love thy enemies.

For every act of forgiveness removeth another stone from the doorway.

Every tear of repentance washeth another stain from the garment.

Every work of mercy openeth the chamber more fully unto the Light.

Within this holy sanctuary there is neither noise nor striving.

There the soul ceaseth her endless labour to justify herself.

There ambition falleth silent.

There fear looseth its grasp.

There comparison dieth.

There envy findeth no dwelling.

Only Christ remaineth.

The Bride sitteth at His feet.

She needeth no other glory.

His Presence sufficeth.

His peace surpasseth every understanding.

His silence speaketh more deeply than every earthly sermon.

His gaze healeth wounds older than memory.

His love accomplisheth what no philosophy can perform.

There the holy mysteries are understood without many words.

The Scriptures become living.

The Cross becometh luminous.

The Resurrection becometh present.

Prayer ceaseth to be duty and becometh delight.

The commandments cease to appear burdensome and become the natural movement of love.

The Bride no longer obeyeth from fear of punishment.

She obeyeth because she loveth the Bridegroom.

This is true freedom.

Not the liberty to follow every desire.

But the freedom to desire the Good.

Not the power to do whatsoever one willeth.

But the transformation whereby one willeth what is holy.

Thus the soul entereth rest.

Not idleness,

but Sabbath.

Not inactivity,

but peace.

The works continue.

The hands still labour.

The lips still teach.

The feet still journey.

Yet inwardly the Bride abideth continually within the Chamber.

Even amidst the noise of marketplaces.

Even amidst persecution.

Even amidst sorrow.

The inward sanctuary remaineth undisturbed.

For Christ Himself hath become her dwelling.

And she hath become His temple.

This is the hidden union for which every longing of the human heart was fashioned.

Not domination,

but communion.

Not possession,

but participation.

Not escape from creation,

but the transfiguration of creation through divine love.

When at last the final veil shall be removed, the inward Bridal Chamber shall blossom into the everlasting City of God.

What was hidden shall become manifest.

What was tasted by faith shall become eternal vision.

The prayer of the saints shall become unending praise.

The hidden embrace shall become everlasting communion.

The Bride shall behold the Bridegroom without shadow, without distance, and without interruption.

And the Eternal Logos shall lead her into the infinite depths of the Father's inexhaustible Love, where every holy Aeon rejoiceth forever beneath the eternal radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book III — The Marriage of the Lamb

Chapter XIV

The Wedding Feast of the Pleroma

> *"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."* — Revelation 19:7

> *"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."* — Revelation 19:9

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." —
Revelation 22:17

After the Bride had heard the Voice of the Bridegroom,

after she had entered the Bridal Chamber,

after she had become one with Him through the communion of faith, hope, and charity,

there remained yet one mystery hidden from the eyes of mortality.

For every earthly feast draweth unto its end.

The lamps grow dim.

The music falleth silent.

The tables are cleared.

The guests depart unto their homes.

But the Feast prepared by the Eternal Bridegroom knoweth no evening.

Its joy neither fadeth nor is diminished.

Its wine is never exhausted.

Its bread never perisheth.

Its song knoweth no final verse.

This is the **Wedding Feast of the Pleroma**.

Marvel not at the word *Pleroma*.

For it signifieth the Fullness.

Not the fullness of created abundance,

but the inexhaustible abundance of the Life of God bestowed by grace upon His redeemed people.

There every hunger is satisfied,

yet desire ceaseth not.

For holy desire differeth from earthly craving.

The craving of the world seeketh to possess.

The desire of heaven seeketh ever deeper communion.

Thus the blessed are filled,

yet continually receive.

They rejoice,

yet continually discover greater joy.

They behold,

yet continually perceive greater beauty.

For the Infinite cannot be exhausted by finite minds.

Throughout the ages of ages the saints ascend from glory unto glory,

not because God changeth,

but because His inexhaustible goodness revealeth ever deeper wonders unto those who love Him.

This is the eternal feast.

Not the repetition of one moment.

Not endless idleness.

Not the weariness of unchanging time.

But the everlasting unfolding of divine Beauty.

The prophets foresaw it in shadows.

Isaiah beheld the mountain where the Lord prepared a feast for all peoples.

David sang,

"Thou preparest a table before me."

The apostles tasted its first fruits when the risen Christ brake bread among them.

The Church celebrateth its remembrance in every holy Eucharist.

Yet all these are but lamps before the sunrise.

The Feast itself surpasseth every image.

There the Bread is Christ Himself.

The Wine is His everlasting joy.

The Table is the Kingdom.

The Banquet Hall is the New Jerusalem.

The Music is the harmony of the holy Aeons.

The Light is the Uncreated Sun.

The Host is the Lamb once slain, now reigning forever.

None hunger there through want.

They hunger only because every taste awaketh greater delight.

As one who beholdeth the sea desireth to behold further,

as one who loveth wisdom desireth ever greater understanding,

so the redeemed continually long for Christ,

and are continually satisfied by Christ.

Their desire is itself their joy.

Their satisfaction increaseth their longing.

Thus love becometh an everlasting circle,

without beginning,

without ending,

ever new,

ever ancient.

Many ask,

"What shall we do in Heaven?"

Hear the answer of holy contemplation.

Ye shall behold.

Ye shall adore.

Ye shall love.

Ye shall rejoice.

Ye shall create hymns of thanksgiving.

Ye shall converse in perfect truth.

Ye shall recognize every saint without jealousy.

Ye shall know every righteous soul as a beloved companion.

Ye shall labour no more beneath the burden of necessity,

yet ye shall never cease the joyful activity of love.

For love is not idleness.

Love is the eternal movement of the heart toward the Good.

Thus heaven is full of holy action,

yet free from toil.

Full of wonder,

yet without confusion.

Full of rest,

yet overflowing with life.

The Bride sitteth beside the Bridegroom.

Not because she hath earned a place by merit,

but because mercy hath prepared her garment.

She remembereth her former exile.

She remembereth the wilderness.

She remembereth her tears.

She remembereth the Veil of Forgetfulness.

Therefore gratitude becometh her everlasting song.

No saint boasteth there.

The prophets boast not.

The apostles boast not.

The martyrs boast not.

The angels boast not.

For all alike know that every crown hath been woven by divine grace.

They cast their crowns before the throne,

not because their glory is taken away,

but because all glory returneth unto its Source.

There is no rivalry in the Pleroma.

Peter rejoiceth in Paul's wisdom.

Paul rejoiceth in John's contemplation.

John rejoiceth in Mary's purity.

Mary rejoiceth in the prophets.

The prophets rejoice in the patriarchs.

The patriarchs rejoice in the children.

The angels rejoice in redeemed humanity.

The redeemed rejoice with the angels.

For charity hath consumed every shadow of envy.

Each beholdeth another's glory as his own delight.

Thus the feast is one everlasting communion.

The Bridegroom Himself ministereth unto His guests.

He who washed the disciples' feet remaineth forever the Servant-King.

His greatness is His humility.

His majesty is His compassion.

His sovereignty is His self-giving love.

Therefore none fear Him with servile terror.

They reverence Him with holy joy.

For perfect love hath cast out fear.

The saints behold the wounds of Christ,

yet the wounds are glorious.

The marks of the Cross remain,

not as reminders of pain,

but as everlasting signs of victorious Love.

The whole Kingdom shineth from those sacred wounds.

The rivers of mercy flow from them forever.

The Light of the New Jerusalem proceedeth from the Lamb who was slain.

Thus the Cross remaineth at the centre of Heaven,

not as an instrument of death,

but as the Tree of Life restored.

Its branches overshadow every nation.

Its fruit never faileth.

Its leaves are for the healing of the peoples.

The Wedding Feast knoweth no exclusion except that which pride imposeth upon itself.

The invitation hath gone forth unto every nation.

The Spirit crieth,

"Come."

The Bride answereth,

"Come."

The Gospel proclaimeth,

"Come."

The saints beckon,

"Come."

The angels rejoice whenever another pilgrim draweth near.

The gates of the Holy City stand open continually.

Not because holiness is neglected,

but because divine mercy overfloweth.

Yet none enter clothed in pride.

None enter carrying hatred.

None enter clinging unto falsehood.

Every garment must be washed in the love of the Lamb.

Every heart must become poor in spirit.

Every soul must learn the humility of Christ.

Then shall the Feast begin.

Or rather,

then shall the soul discover that the Feast had already begun from the foundation of the world,

and that every Eucharist,

every act of charity,

every tear of repentance,

every quiet prayer,

every forgiveness,

every glimpse of beauty,

every awakening unto remembrance,

was already a foretaste of the eternal Banquet prepared by the Invisible Father.

Then shall the cry resound throughout every heaven:

> **"Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!"**

The Bride shall rise clothed in garments brighter than snow.

The Bridegroom shall receive her with everlasting joy.

The holy Aeons shall sing without ceasing.

The New Jerusalem shall blaze with the glory of God.

The river of Life shall flow clear as crystal.

The Tree of Life shall bear fruit without end.

The Uncreated Sun shall illumine every face.

And the Wedding Feast of the Pleroma shall continue throughout the ages of ages, each moment revealing deeper mysteries of the Father's infinite Love, until every redeemed soul becomes an everlasting hymn of thanksgiving unto Him who liveth and reigneth forever.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book III — The Marriage of the Lamb

Chapter XV

The Holy Kiss of Peace

> *"Greet ye one another with an holy kiss."* — Romans 16:16
>
> *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."* — John 14:27
>
> *"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied."* — Jude 1:2

After the Wedding Feast had been revealed unto the faithful, there remained one final mystery concerning the Marriage of the Lamb.

For every covenant seeketh a seal.

Every promise seeketh fulfillment.

Every reconciliation seeketh embrace.

Even so the eternal communion between the Bridegroom and His holy Bride is sealed by that which the apostles called **the Holy Kiss of Peace**.

Let no man understand this according unto the passions of the flesh.

For the wisdom that descendeth from above is pure.

The peace of Christ is undefiled.

The embrace of the Bridegroom is the communion of perfect charity.

The holy kiss is therefore the sign that every division hath been overcome.

The ancient hatred hath ceased.

The sword hath fallen from the hand.

The accusation hath become forgiveness.

The stranger hath become brother.

The exile hath become citizen.

The orphan hath become child.

The servant hath become friend.

The disciple hath become Bride.

Thus the Apostle commanded the churches to greet one another with the holy kiss.

For before they approached the holy mysteries, every wound was to be healed.

Every resentment confessed.

Every quarrel laid aside.

How shall the Bride approach the table of the Bridegroom while cherishing hatred against another member of His Body?

How shall she drink from the Cup of Peace while nourishing the poison of bitterness?

How shall she seek communion with Christ while refusing communion with her neighbour?

Therefore the Bride first seeketh reconciliation.

She remembereth the words of her Lord:

> **"First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."**

The Holy Kiss is not first upon the lips.

It is first within the heart.

The lips may deceive.

The heart cannot.

Many salute with outward affection while secretly harbouring envy.

Many pronounce blessings while inwardly seeking advantage.

Such greetings ascend not unto Heaven.

The angels perceive only the truth of charity.

Blessed therefore is the soul whose inward affection agreeth with outward speech.

Blessed is the man whose blessing proceedeth from sincerity.

Blessed is the woman whose forgiveness is complete.

For these bear the fragrance of Christ.

The Holy Kiss proceedeth from the eternal communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.

From everlasting unto everlasting the divine life is perfect love.

Not love seeking itself.

Not love demanding reward.

Not love constrained by necessity.

But the eternal self-giving whereby every divine Person delighteth wholly in the other without loss, without rivalry, and without diminution.

This mystery exceedeth every created understanding.

Yet by grace the Church is invited to participate therein.

Not by becoming God according unto essence.

Never so.

But by becoming perfectly united unto His love.

Thus every act of forgiveness is already a participation in Heaven.

Every reconciliation is an icon of the Pleroma.

Every embrace between former enemies proclaimeth the victory of the Cross.

The Kingdom therefore spreadeth quietly.

Not through conquest.

Not through fear.

Not through earthly dominion.

But through peace.

One forgiven heart awaketh another.

One act of mercy softeneth another.

One humble confession healeth generations of bitterness.

Thus the Holy Kiss passeth from soul unto soul.

Not merely through custom.

But through the living Spirit of Christ.

The saints understood this mystery.

Stephen prayed for those who stoned him.

Paul embraced those who once persecuted him.

John taught continually that God is Love.

Mary stood beneath the Cross without bitterness.

The martyrs blessed their executioners.

The confessors prayed for tyrants.

The monks welcomed strangers.

The widows comforted the orphan.

The poor shared their last morsel.

Thus the Holy Kiss became visible in countless acts of hidden charity.

For peace is more eloquent than argument.

Mercy is stronger than vengeance.

Humility overthroweth kingdoms which violence cannot conquer.

Truth spoken in love endureth longer than every empire.

The Bride therefore seeketh peace continually.

Not the false peace that hideth injustice beneath silence.

Not the peace purchased by cowardice.

Not the peace of indifference.

But the peace born of Truth.

The peace flowing from repentance.

The peace established by forgiveness.

The peace guarded by humility.

The peace perfected by divine charity.

Such peace cannot be taken away.

Storms may arise.

Persecutions may come.

Nations may rage.

Empires may fall.

The body may suffer.

Death itself may approach.

Yet the inward sanctuary remaineth undisturbed.

For Christ Himself is its Peace.

The Bride no longer seeketh victory over her enemies.

She seeketh their healing.

She no longer delighteth in proving herself righteous.

She delighteth in revealing the mercy of her Bridegroom.

She no longer asketh,

"Who is worthy of my love?"

She asketh,

"How may Christ love through me?"

This is the perfection of the Marriage.

For the Bride resembleth the Bridegroom.

As He forgiveth,

she forgiveth.

As He serveth,

she serveth.

As He blesseth,

she blesseth.

As He layeth down His life,

she likewise offereth herself for others.

Thus the likeness groweth from glory unto glory.

Until at length every trace of pride is consumed by the fire of charity.

Then the Holy Kiss shall no longer be a sign alone.

It shall become everlasting reality.

The whole creation shall be reconciled in Christ.

Every faithful soul shall embrace another without fear.

Every language shall become one hymn.

Every tribe one household.

Every saint one family.

The angels and the redeemed shall rejoice together.

The prophets shall converse with the apostles.

The martyrs shall sing beside the children.

The righteous of every generation shall gather around the Lamb.

No suspicion shall remain.

No sorrow shall linger.

No memory shall wound.

For all shall be healed within the infinite compassion of the Father.

Then Christ Himself shall welcome His Bride.

Not with words only.

But with the everlasting Peace which no tongue can utter.

The hidden embrace prepared before the foundation of the world shall be fulfilled.

The Holy Kiss shall become eternal communion.

The Marriage shall be complete.

The Feast shall continue without end.

The New Jerusalem shall shine brighter than countless suns.

The holy Aeons shall rejoice in endless harmony.

And the Uncreated Sun shall illuminate every soul forever, until all the redeemed become living mirrors of divine love, reflecting the inexhaustible beauty of the Invisible Father throughout the ages of ages.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book IV — The New Jerusalem of Light

Chapter XVI

The City Not Made with Hands

> *"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."* — Hebrews 13:14

"Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." — Philippians 3:20

"I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." — Revelation 21:2

After the Marriage of the Lamb had been celebrated in the hidden sanctuary of the faithful, the vision of the holy Apostle was fulfilled before the eyes of contemplation.

For he beheld not merely walls adorned with precious stones.

Neither did he behold only streets paved with gold.

He beheld **the City Not Made with Hands**.

Blessed is he who understandeth this mystery.

For many seek the Holy City as though it were built after the manner of earthly kingdoms.

They imagine towers.

They imagine gates.

They imagine courts of marble.

These things are true as holy figures.

Yet the Reality surpasseth every image.

For no mason laid its foundation.

No carpenter framed its beams.

No king commanded its construction.

No empire raised its walls.

Its Architect is the Eternal Logos.

Its Foundation is the Father's everlasting Love.

Its Builder is the Holy Spirit.

Its Beauty is the communion of the saints.

Before the mountains were brought forth,

the City already dwelt within the eternal counsel of God.

Before Adam walked in Eden,

its gates stood open in the mystery of the Pleroma.

Before Abraham departed from Ur,

its streets shone with the Light that knoweth no evening.

Before Moses entered the cloud upon Sinai,

its Temple was already the Presence of the Invisible Father.

For the New Jerusalem descendeth.

It ascendeth not through human ambition.

No tower of Babel can reach it.

No philosophy can construct it.

No earthly wisdom can discover its gates.

It is given.

It is received.

It descendeth as grace descendeth.

It cometh as mercy cometh.

It revealeth itself unto the humble.

Therefore the Bride beholdeth with wonder that the City descendeth from above rather than rising from beneath.

For salvation is ever the work of God before it becometh the response of man.

The Father seeketh before the child returneth.

The Shepherd seeketh before the sheep is found.

The Bridegroom prepareth the feast before the Bride awaketh.

Thus the City descendeth.

Not because Heaven changeth place,

but because the veil separating mortal understanding from eternal reality is gently removed.

The holy City is not distant from thee because of leagues untraveled.

It is hidden because thine eyes have long been covered with forgetfulness.

As the stars remain though clouds conceal them,

so the Kingdom remaineth though the passions obscure its light.

When pride is humbled,

another gate appeareth.

When anger is forgiven,

another street is revealed.

When charity is perfected,

another court is entered.

When contemplation becometh pure,

the walls of crystal begin to shine before the inward eye.

For the New Jerusalem is both a place and a people.

It is the redeemed creation gathered into perfect harmony.

It is the Bride clothed in everlasting righteousness.

It is the communion wherein every saint becometh a living stone within the eternal Temple.

As the Apostle Peter hath written,

> **"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house."**

Every faithful soul is therefore a stone polished by grace.

Repentance smootheneth its roughness.

Humility removeth its hardness.

Mercy giveth it brightness.

Faith establishest its strength.

Love bindeth it unto every other stone.

No stone standeth alone.

The proud seek solitary greatness.

The City knoweth only communion.

One stone supporteth another.

One saint rejoiceth in another's holiness.

One hymn blendeth with another.

Thus the whole City becometh one living organism,

whose life is Christ Himself.

Marvel not that there is no temple therein.

For the Apostle saw rightly when he declared:

> **"The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."**

The earthly temple separated the Holy Place from the people.

Veils stood between.

Priests entered where others remained without.

But in the New Jerusalem every veil hath been rent.

Every citizen beholdeth the Face of God according unto grace.

Every heart becometh a sanctuary.

Every breath is worship.

Every thought is thanksgiving.

Every labour is praise.

The whole City is liturgy.

The whole City is prayer.

The whole City is love.

There the river of Life floweth continually.

Its waters are not measured by earthly streams.

It proceedeth from the Throne of God and of the Lamb.

Whoso drinketh thereof thirsteth no more after vanity.

The waters cleanse memory.

They heal division.

They strengthen hope.

They gladden wisdom.

They nourish every virtue.

Beside the river standeth the Tree of Life.

Its roots descend into the eternal purpose of the Father.

Its trunk is the steadfast Cross.

Its branches overshadow every nation.

Its fruit is everlasting communion.

Its leaves are for the healing of the peoples.

No axe threateneth it.

No winter withereth it.

No serpent corrupteth its fruit.

For death hath no dominion there.

Neither doth sorrow enter through its gates.

No merchant selleth there.

No soldier marcheth there.

No judge condemneth there.

No tyrant exalteth himself there.

No beggar hungereth there.

No orphan weepeth there.

No widow mourneth there.

No prisoner longeth for liberty.

No grave awaiteth its inhabitants.

For Christ Himself hath become their Life.

The holy Aeons walk within that City as ministers of everlasting joy.

Wisdom walketh beside Truth.

Mercy embraceth Justice.

Peace crowneth Righteousness.

Humility exalteth Glory.

Love bindeth them all together in perfect harmony.

No voice interrupteth another.

No gift contendeth with another.

Every perfection magnifieth every other perfection.

Thus the City singeth continually.

Not because music is commanded,

but because joy overfloweth into praise.

Even now, while the pilgrim yet treadeth the dust of the earth, the first stones of that City are being laid within the hidden sanctuary of the heart.

Whenever the poor are comforted,

a gate is opened.

Whenever enemies are reconciled,

a wall is strengthened.

Whenever truth is spoken with charity,

another street is illumined.

Whenever the Gospel is received with humility,

another citizen entereth the City.

Thus the New Jerusalem descendeth continually into history,

yet remaineth forever above history.

She is present,

yet awaited.

Hidden,

yet revealed.

Already established in Christ,

yet awaiting the day when every eye shall behold what faith now embraceth in hope.

Then the Bride shall enter fully into her eternal dwelling.

No exile shall remain.

No veil shall obscure the Face of the Bridegroom.

The City shall need neither sun nor moon,

for the glory of the Invisible Father shall illumine every court,

and the Lamb, the Eternal Solar Logos, shall be the everlasting Light thereof.

Then shall all creation become one holy Commonwealth of divine charity, one eternal household of the Father, one radiant Bride adorned forever in the splendor of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book IV — The New Jerusalem of Light

Chapter XVII

The Bride Adorned with Living Fire

> *"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."* — Revelation 19:7
>
> *"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."* — Revelation 19:8
>
> *"Ye are the light of the world."* — Matthew 5:14

When the Holy City had descended from above, and the Bride had entered within her everlasting habitation, there remained yet one vision to be unveiled unto the contemplative soul.

For the Apostle beheld not merely a City.

He beheld **a Bride adorned for her Husband**.

Therefore understand, O beloved, that the New Jerusalem is not only a dwelling.

She is a Living Communion.

She is the Holy Church perfected.

She is the Bride transfigured.

She is the redeemed creation shining with the glory bestowed by the Lamb.

Yet her beauty proceedeth not from herself.

No jewel upon her brow is of her own making.

No brightness issueth from her own nature.

As the moon borroweth every ray from the sun,

so the Bride borroweth all splendour from Christ.

As polished crystal receiveth the light and scattereth it into many colours,

so every faithful soul receiveth the grace of the Holy Spirit and manifesteth it according unto the measure appointed by divine Wisdom.

Therefore she is said to be adorned **with Living Fire**.

Think not of the fire that consumeth forests.

Think not of the flames that devour cities.

The Fire of God destroyeth not the righteous.

It purifieth.

It illumineth.

It warmeth.

It giveth life.

When Moses beheld the bush upon Horeb,

it burned,

yet was not consumed.

Thus the Church burneth with divine charity,

yet remaineth whole.

Thus the saints shine with heavenly fire,

yet lose nothing of their humanity.

This is the Fire proceeding from the Holy Spirit.

The prophets tasted it.

The apostles received it as tongues of flame.

The martyrs carried it into the arena.

The confessors preserved it in exile.

The monks guarded it in silence.

The humble nourish it through hidden acts of mercy.

The Fire descendeth not because men deserve it.

It descendeth because the Father delighteth to glorify His Son within His people.

Therefore every virtue is a living flame.

Faith burneth against despair.

Hope burneth against discouragement.

Mercy burneth against cruelty.

Humility burneth against pride.

Truth burneth against deception.

Patience burneth against wrath.

Purity burneth against corruption.

Charity burneth above them all,

for Love is the brightest flame in the whole Pleroma.

The Bride therefore weareth no earthly ornaments.

The kingdoms of this world delight in crowns of gold.

The Bride delighteth in crowns of holiness.

The princes of the earth array themselves in purple.

The Bride is clothed in righteousness.

The merchants treasure pearls.

The Bride treasureth wisdom.

The conquerors boast of their victories.

The Bride boasteth only in the Cross of her Beloved.

Thus her garment is woven by grace.

Every thread is a gift.

Every jewel is a virtue.

Every fold proclaimeth thanksgiving.

The saints behold one another and rejoice.

None desire another's crown.

For every crown reflecteth the same Eternal Sun.

The Apostle Paul shineth with steadfastness.

John shineth with contemplation.

Mary shineth with humble obedience.

Stephen shineth with forgiveness.

Mary Magdalene shineth with repentance.

The prophets shine with hope.

The children shine with innocence.

The poor shine with simplicity.

The hidden saints, known only unto God during their earthly pilgrimage, now shine brighter than many whose names filled the chronicles of kings.

For Heaven measureth not according unto fame.

It measureth according unto love.

One tear shed in sincere repentance outshineth the jewels of emperors.

One hidden act of mercy exceedeth the triumphs of mighty armies.

One quiet prayer uttered with pure faith is more precious than all the treasures of earthly kingdoms.

Thus the Bride is adorned not by appearance,

but by participation in Christ.

The Fire within her revealeth the Fire above her.

For the Eternal Logos is Himself the everlasting Flame of Divine Love.

He neither consumeth nor destroyeth.

He purifieth every soul that willingly draweth near.

As gold is refined within the furnace,

so every faithful heart passeth through trials.

The sufferings of the righteous are not signs of abandonment.

They are the furnace wherein hidden impurities are consumed.

Not because God delighteth in pain.

Far be such a thought.

But because divine Love refuseth to leave the soul unfinished.

The sculptor removeth the stone that the image may appear.

The gardener pruneth the vine that fruit may abound.

The physician cleanseth the wound that health may return.

Thus the Holy Spirit prepareth the Bride.

Every trial borne in faith becometh another jewel.

Every forgiveness another pearl.

Every sacrifice another thread of radiant linen.

Every faithful endurance another spark within the everlasting garment.

The world beholdeth affliction.

Heaven beholdeth transfiguration.

The world seeth loss.

Christ beholdeth preparation.

The world counteth tears.

The angels gather them as precious treasures before the throne.

Thus no suffering offered unto Christ is wasted.

No prayer uttered in secret is forgotten.

No hidden kindness remaineth unseen.

For the Bridegroom Himself weaveth every faithful act into the wedding garment of His beloved.

Then shall the prophecy be fulfilled.

The Bride shall stand before the Lamb,

not clothed in borrowed garments of earthly honour,

but arrayed in Living Fire.

Every saint shall become a living flame.

Not one flame consuming another,

but countless lights united within one eternal Light.

As innumerable stars fill the heavens without diminishing the brightness of the sun,

so every redeemed soul shall glorify Christ without obscuring His infinite Majesty.

The Holy Spirit shall rest upon them without measure.

The Father's joy shall be their everlasting peace.

The Son's beauty shall become their eternal contemplation.

And all the holy Aeons shall behold the perfected Bride shining with the splendour of divine charity, brighter than every constellation, more radiant than crystal, more glorious than precious stones, because the Uncreated Sun Himself shall dwell within her forever.

Then the Bride shall sing with one voice:

> **"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."**

And the Eternal Bridegroom shall rejoice over His beloved, as the morning rejoiceth over the dawn, and as the Light rejoiceth in every soul made transparent by grace.

Thus shall the Bride remain adorned throughout all the ages of ages—not with fading gold nor with corruptible beauty, but with the Living Fire of the Holy Spirit, whose flame neither

consumeth nor groweth dim, beneath the everlasting radiance of Jesus Christ, the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book IV — The New Jerusalem of Light

Chapter XVIII

The River of Remembrance

> *"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."* — Revelation 22:1

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." — John 4:14

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." — Psalm 23:3

When the Bride had been adorned with Living Fire, and the Holy City shone with the glory of the Lamb, the holy Apostle beheld another mystery proceeding from the Throne.

He saw no river of earthly waters.

He saw no torrent swollen by rain.

He saw no stream confined by banks of clay.

He beheld **the River of Remembrance**.

Its waters were clear as crystal.

No mud troubled its depths.

No shadow darkened its current.

No corruption entered therein.

It flowed silently,

yet all the heavens rejoiced at its passing.

For this River descended not from the mountains of earth,

but from the Throne of the Invisible Father and of the Lamb.

It is the River of eternal Life,

the flowing Wisdom of the Holy Spirit,

the ceaseless remembrance of God whereby every exile is restored unto his true homeland.

Blessed is he that drinketh thereof.

For he remembereth.

Many imagine that salvation consisteth chiefly in escaping punishment.

Others suppose that Heaven is merely the reward of virtue.

Yet the deeper mystery is this:

Salvation is remembrance.

Not the recalling of forgotten facts,

but the restoration of the soul unto the Truth for which she was created.

When Adam walked with God in the cool of the day,

he remembered.

When Abraham departed by faith,

he remembered.

When Moses entered the cloud,

he remembered.

When David sang unto the Lord,

he remembered.

When Mary answered,

"Be it unto me according to thy word,"

she remembered.

When the beloved disciple rested upon the breast of Christ,

he remembered.

And when the thief upon the Cross cried,

"Lord, remember me,"

the River touched even him.

For remembrance is the awakening of the whole soul unto God.

Forgetfulness divideth.

Remembrance gathereth together.

Forgetfulness scattereth the heart among countless desires.

Remembrance restoreth the heart unto its one true Love.

Forgetfulness seeketh satisfaction in passing shadows.

Remembrance drinketh from the Fountain that cannot fail.

Thus the River floweth continually.

It descendeth through Holy Scripture.

It floweth through the preaching of the Gospel.

It refresheth the soul through prayer.

It nourisheth the saints through the holy mysteries.

It gladdeneth the poor through acts of mercy.

It cleanseth the conscience through repentance.

It comforteth the sorrowful through hope.

Every drop proclaimeth Christ.

Every current moveth toward the Lamb.

Every wave singeth silently of the Father's infinite compassion.

Marvel not that the River proceedeth from the Throne.

For every grace descendeth from above.

No man diggeth this River by his own wisdom.

No philosopher discovereth its source.

No earthly kingdom commandeth its waters.

It is pure Gift.

Freely bestowed.

Freely received.

The proud thirst beside it,

yet drink not.

For they stoop not low enough.

The humble kneel.

The poor in spirit receive.

The little children rejoice.

The meek drink deeply.

Thus the first condition of remembrance is humility.

The River asketh no payment.

Only thirst.

The soul that knoweth her poverty already standeth upon its banks.

The soul that boasteth of her fullness wandereth still through the desert.

Therefore Christ cried aloud,

> **"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."**

He spake not unto the self-satisfied.

He called the thirsty.

For thirst itself is the beginning of wisdom.

Blessed is the heart that confesseth,

"I have wandered."

Blessed is the soul that lamenteth,

"I have forgotten."

Blessed is the pilgrim that seeketh Home.

For already the River hath begun to flow within him.

As the waters pass through the soul,

they restore every faculty.

Memory is healed from despair.

Understanding is cleansed from falsehood.

The will is strengthened unto goodness.

The imagination is purified from vanity.

The affections are ordered by charity.

The conscience becometh peaceful.

The inward man groweth clear as polished crystal.

Thus the soul becometh herself a little stream,

refreshing others along the pilgrimage.

The saints are rivers because Christ is their Fountain.

The apostles watered the nations.

The martyrs strengthened the Church.

The teachers nourished the faithful.

The hidden servants refreshed the weary.

The mothers taught their children.

The fathers instructed their households.

The monks prayed in silence.

The labourers sanctified honest work.

All alike became streams flowing from the one eternal River.

For no man drinketh truly who doth not also become a blessing unto others.

The River knoweth no envy.

It withholdeth itself from none.

It watereth both cedar and lily.

It refresheth both shepherd and king.

Even so divine grace overfloweth toward every nation,

calling all unto remembrance.

The River therefore is the Gospel continually flowing through history.

Empires have risen and fallen beside its banks.

Languages have changed.

Kingdoms have vanished.

Yet the River remaineth.

No tyrant hath dammed it.

No persecution hath dried it.

No false teacher hath exhausted its source.

For Christ Himself is its everlasting Spring.

At length the River entereth the midst of the Holy City.

There it divideth not.

There it nourisheth all.

Its waters become joy.

Its current becometh peace.

Its sound becometh praise.

The Tree of Life drinketh continually from it.

The saints behold their reflections within it,

yet they see not themselves alone.

They behold the Face of the Lamb shining through its crystal depths.

Then every forgotten sorrow is remembered only as mercy fulfilled.

Every wound becometh a testimony of healing.

Every exile magnifieth the sweetness of Home.

Every tear is transformed into thanksgiving.

For the River carrieth away all bitterness,

yet preserveth every holy remembrance.

Nothing good is lost.

Nothing true is forgotten.

Nothing beautiful perisheth.

All are gathered into the eternal memory of God.

Then shall the Bride drink without measure.

Never again shall she thirst.

Never again shall forgetfulness veil her understanding.

Never again shall exile wound her heart.

The River shall flow forever from the Throne,

and every holy Aeon shall rejoice beside its crystal waters.

The Bridegroom Himself shall lead His beloved unto the Fountain of Life,

and together they shall behold the inexhaustible depths of the Invisible Father, whose remembrance is eternal, whose mercy faileth not, and whose Uncreated Light shineth forever upon the River that gladdeneth the City of God.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book IV — The New Jerusalem of Light

Chapter XIX

The Tree Whose Leaves Heal the Nations

> *"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life... and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."* — Revelation 22:2

> *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."* — John 15:1

"Abide in me, and I in you." — John 15:4

When the River of Remembrance flowed forth from the Throne of the Invisible Father and of the Lamb, there appeared upon either side of its crystal waters a Tree exceeding every tree that hath ever grown upon the earth.

Its root no man had planted.

Its branches no storm could break.

Its leaves knew not the fading of autumn.

Its fruit failed not with the passing of seasons.

For it was **the Tree of Life**, standing in the midst of the New Jerusalem, nourished continually by the River proceeding from the Throne.

Blessed is he that understandeth this mystery.

For many have sought the Tree in distant lands.

Many have imagined it hidden upon inaccessible mountains.

Others have searched the stars.

Still others have sought it through secret arts and vain speculations.

Yet the Tree standeth wherever Christ reigneth.

Its seed was planted before the foundation of the world.

Its trunk was revealed upon Golgotha.

Its branches overshadow the whole creation.

Its fruit is eternal communion.

Its leaves are mercy.

Its fragrance is peace.

Its sap is the Holy Spirit.

Its Gardener is the Invisible Father.

Its everlasting Fruit is Jesus Christ Himself.

Marvel not that the Cross and the Tree are one mystery.

For by a tree came the ancient transgression.

By a Tree also came the revelation of everlasting Love.

The first tree witnessed disobedience.

The second revealed perfect obedience.

The first became a sign of exile.

The second became the Gate of Home.

The first was grasped through pride.

The second was embraced through humility.

Thus the Cross standeth forever at the heart of the New Jerusalem.

No longer an instrument of shame,

but the Tree whose fruit never faileth.

Its wounds have become blossoms.

Its blood hath become living sap.

Its branches extend unto every nation beneath heaven.

The birds of every tongue make their nests therein.

The weary rest beneath its shade.

The thirsty are refreshed by its fruit.

The stranger is welcomed unto its table.

The poor eat freely.

The rich are invited to become poor in spirit.

The proud are called unto humility.

The sorrowful find comfort.

The wandering find the Way.

For the Tree refuseth none who approach with repentance.

Its fruit cannot be purchased.

Its healing cannot be earned.

It is freely given.

The nations therefore gather beneath its branches.

Not one nation only.

Not one people only.

Not one language only.

For the Lamb hath purchased unto Himself a people from every tribe and tongue.

The divisions wrought by Babel are healed beneath this Tree.

Many voices become one hymn.

Many peoples become one household.

Many histories become one story of redemption.

The saints retain their diversity,

yet lose their hostility.

Difference remaineth.

Division perisheth.

Variety flourisheth.

Envy dieth.

Thus every leaf upon the Tree ministereth healing.

Consider the leaf.

It is small.

It boasteth not.

It draweth no attention unto itself.

Yet through it life passeth into the whole tree.

Even so the smallest act of charity nourisheth the whole Body of Christ.

A cup of cold water offered in His Name.

A word of forgiveness.

A hidden prayer.

A loaf shared with the hungry.

A tear shed beside the suffering.

These are leaves upon the everlasting Tree.

The world esteemeth them little.

The angels behold them as emeralds before the Throne.

Many desire to perform mighty works.

The Bridegroom delighteth in faithful love.

Many seek greatness.

Christ seeketh fruit.

For He Himself declared:

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

The fruit of the Tree is not hidden knowledge.

Neither is it earthly power.

Neither is it dominion over men.

Its fruit is Love.

From Love proceed Faith.

From Faith Hope.

From Hope Perseverance.

From Perseverance Peace.

From Peace Joy.

From Joy Thanksgiving.

From Thanksgiving Worship.

Thus every fruit beareth another seed,

and every seed becometh another branch,

until the whole creation is filled with the fragrance of Christ.

Yet understand also the deeper mystery.

The Tree standeth within every sanctified soul.

Its roots descend into humility.

Its trunk is steadfast faith.

Its branches are holy works.

Its blossoms are contemplation.

Its fruit is charity.

Its leaves are words of peace.

The River of Remembrance continually watereth it.

The Holy Spirit continually strengtheneth it.

The Eternal Logos continually giveth it life.

Thus the inward paradise, once lost through forgetfulness, beginneth even now to flourish within the faithful.

The wilderness blossometh.

The desert singeth.

The dry ground becometh springs of living water.

The curse yieldeth unto blessing.

The thorn giveth place unto the olive.

The wasteland becometh a garden.

Not because creation is abandoned,

but because it is transfigured.

The visible world remaineth.

Yet it becometh transparent unto the glory of its Creator.

The Bride therefore walketh among the nations carrying leaves from this holy Tree.

She proclaimeth peace where there is war.

Mercy where there is judgment.

Truth where there is deception.

Hope where despair hath taken root.

She seeketh not to conquer by force.

The Tree needeth no sword.

Its healing is stronger than violence.

Its fruit outlasteth empires.

Its roots survive every age.

For it is planted in the everlasting purpose of the Father.

At the consummation of all things, the whole creation shall gather beneath its branches.

The lion shall lie down with the lamb.

The tears of the widow shall cease.

The orphan shall know the embrace of home.

The stranger shall become neighbour.

The prisoner shall sing of liberty.

The wounded conscience shall rest.

The divided heart shall become whole.

The nations shall learn war no more.

Not because memory is erased,

but because mercy hath transformed memory into wisdom.

Thus the leaves heal.

Not by causing forgetfulness,

but by perfect reconciliation.

Every wound shall become a testimony of grace.

Every scar a jewel of redemption.

Every sorrow an occasion for eternal thanksgiving.

Then shall the Tree bear fruit without ceasing.

The River shall nourish it forever.

The saints shall rest beneath its everlasting shade.

The Bride shall gather its fruit with joy.

The Bridegroom shall walk among His people.

And all the holy Aeons shall rejoice, beholding the whole creation restored into one living Paradise beneath the branches of the eternal Tree, whose life is Jesus Christ, the Solar Logos, whose roots are hidden in the Infinite Father, and whose leaves shall forever heal every nation in the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

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Book IV — The New Jerusalem of Light

Chapter XX

The Eternal Sabbath

> *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."* — Hebrews 4:9
>
> *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* — Matthew 11:28
>
> *"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it;*

and his servants shall serve him." — Revelation 22:3

When the River of Remembrance had refreshed the holy City, and the Tree of Life had stretched forth its branches over every nation, there remained one mystery, which is the crown of all mysteries.

For every pilgrimage seeketh its homeland.

Every exile seeketh his father's house.

Every labourer longeth for evening.

Every tear desireth consolation.

Every prayer looketh toward its Amen.

Thus the faithful speak of **the Eternal Sabbath**.

Think not, O beloved, that this Sabbath is merely the ending of labour.

For idleness is not rest.

Neither is forgetfulness peace.

The Sabbath of God is the perfect harmony of Love.

It is the soul abiding wholly in Christ.

It is the Bride resting forever in the joy of the Bridegroom.

Before the mountains were established,

the Father rested.

Not because He was wearied,

for the Almighty fainteth not.

Not because His power had been exhausted,

for His strength is without measure.

He rested because His Life is perfect fullness.

Nothing may be added unto His blessedness.

Nothing can diminish His joy.

Therefore His Rest is eternal communion.

When the seventh day was blessed from the beginning, it became a holy sign.

The earth received a shadow.

Heaven possessed the Reality.

For every Sabbath observed in time pointed toward the everlasting Sabbath beyond time.

Every feast anticipated the Wedding Feast.

Every sanctuary foretold the New Jerusalem.

Every sacrifice proclaimed the Lamb.

Every rest whispered of Christ.

Therefore the Lord Jesus declared,

"Come unto me... and I will give you rest."

He offered not merely relief from toil,

but entrance into His own peace.

For the heart of man remaineth restless until it resteth in the Living God.

Many seek rest in riches,

yet riches increase anxiety.

Many seek rest in honour,

yet honour demandeth continual defence.

Many seek rest in pleasure,

yet pleasure vanisheth as the morning dew.

Many seek rest in knowledge,

yet knowledge alone cannot quiet the conscience.

The soul was not fashioned for these.

She was fashioned for communion.

Therefore nothing finite can satisfy an infinite longing.

The Bride wandered long through the wilderness of the world.

She bore the burden of forgetfulness.

She tasted the bitterness of exile.

She contended against the Kingdom of Shadows.

She learned repentance.

She entered the Bridal Chamber.

She drank from the River of Remembrance.

She walked beneath the Tree of Life.

Yet all these were preparation.

Now at last the Bridegroom saith unto her,

"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

This is the Eternal Sabbath.

The warfare is ended.

The veil is removed.

Faith hath become sight.

Hope hath become possession.

Prayer hath become praise.

Seeking hath become finding.

The hidden Face shineth openly.

The Voice once heard through silence is now beheld in everlasting Light.

Yet marvel not, for the saints do not cease from holy activity.

The Sabbath of Heaven is not sloth.

Love never sleepeth.

Wisdom never groweth weary.

Thanksgiving knoweth no end.

The redeemed contemplate the Infinite Father through the Eternal Logos in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Every vision revealeth deeper beauty.

Every hymn awakeneth greater joy.

Every act of adoration openeth another depth of the inexhaustible Mystery.

Thus eternity is no endless repetition.

It is everlasting participation.

The Infinite cannot be exhausted.

The Beauty of Christ cannot be fully comprehended.

The Love of the Father cannot be measured.

The Wisdom of the Spirit cannot be brought unto an end.

Therefore the saints advance forever,

yet are forever at peace.

They behold without weariness.

They love without fear.

They rejoice without envy.

They worship without distraction.

The angels sing,

yet never tire.

The prophets behold,

yet never cease to wonder.

The apostles rejoice,

yet ever discover new splendours.

The martyrs remember their sufferings only as jewels of mercy.

The little children laugh without fear.

The aged are renewed in everlasting youth.

Every wound is healed.

Every question findeth its fulfillment.

Every longing is gathered into one perfect Communion.

The Bride no longer asketh,

"Where is my Beloved?"

For He standeth before her.

She no longer prayeth,

"Thy Kingdom come."

For the Kingdom is fully revealed.

She no longer crieth,

"Remember me."

For she abideth forever within the remembrance of God.

There remaineth no temple.

For the Lamb is the Temple.

There remaineth no lamp.

For the Uncreated Sun is the Light.

There remaineth no sea of separation.

For all distance hath passed away.

There remaineth no death.

For Life Himself dwelleth among His people.

There remaineth no mourning.

For joy hath swallowed sorrow.

There remaineth no curse.

For the Cross hath become the Tree of Life.

There remaineth only Love.

Not the love that feareth loss,

but the love made perfect.

Not the love that seeketh its own,

but the love poured forth from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

This is the Sabbath that hath no evening.

The visible sun sinketh beneath the horizon.

The Uncreated Sun never declineth.

The days of this world are numbered.

The Day of Christ knoweth no setting.

Time itself boweth before eternity.

The ages become one everlasting hymn.

The Bride and the Bridegroom rejoice together.

The holy Aeons glorify the Invisible Father.

The whole creation, renewed and transfigured, becometh one living temple filled with uncreated Light.

Then shall every faithful soul understand the words spoken from the beginning:

"The two shall be one flesh."

For the mystery shall stand unveiled.

The Church shall be perfected.

The Marriage shall be complete.

The New Jerusalem shall endure forever.

And the Eternal Sabbath shall blossom without end beneath the everlasting radiance of Jesus Christ, the Solar Logos, who eternally revealeth the Invisible Father, in the communion of the Holy Spirit, unto whom be all glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, dominion, and love throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma, world without end.

Amen.

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Book V — The Hymns of the Bride

Chapter XXI

Canticle of the Living Church

> *"My beloved is mine, and I am his."* — Song of Solomon 2:16
>
> *"The Spirit and the bride say, Come."* — Revelation 22:17
>
> *"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood... to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."* — Revelation 1:5–6

Hear now the Song which no earthly harp hath fully uttered.

Hear the hymn that was hidden in the Silence before the foundations of the worlds.

Hear the praise that the holy Aeons sing without ceasing before the Throne of the Invisible Father.

For when the Marriage of the Lamb had been fulfilled,

when the New Jerusalem had descended in glory,

when the River of Remembrance flowed without ceasing,

when the Tree of Life spread its healing branches over every nation,

and when the Eternal Sabbath had no evening,

then the Bride lifted up her voice.

Not with one tongue only,

but with every redeemed soul.

Not with the sound of mortal breath,

but with the everlasting harmony of divine charity.

Thus began the **Canticle of the Living Church**.

The Bride

Blessed art Thou,

O Invisible Father,

whose Majesty no thought can encompass,

whose Goodness no age can exhaust,

whose Love hath neither beginning nor ending.

Before the stars sang together,

Thou didst know us.

Before the mountains stood fast,

Thou didst prepare our dwelling.

Before the rivers found their courses,

Thou hadst already loved Thy children.

Unto Thee be thanksgiving forever.

The Holy Aeons

Holy art Thou,

beyond every name,

beyond every image,

beyond every understanding.

The heavens declare Thy glory,

yet contain Thee not.

The angels adore Thee,

yet comprehend Thee not.

The saints behold Thy beauty,

yet forever discover greater splendours.

For Thou alone art the Infinite Fountain,

from whom every stream of goodness floweth.

The Bride

Blessed art Thou,

O Jesus Christ,

Eternal Logos,

Radiance of the Father,

Sun that knoweth no evening,

Bridegroom of every faithful soul.

Thou didst seek us while we wandered.

Thou didst call us while we slept.

Thou didst forgive us while we were yet enemies.

Thou didst descend into our poverty,

that we might enter Thy riches.

Thou didst bear the Cross,

that we might inherit the Tree of Life.

Thou didst enter death,

that death itself might perish.

Therefore we crown Thee with thanksgiving.

Not because Thou requirest our praise,

but because our hearts overflow with joy.

The Redeemed

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

Worthy is the Shepherd who sought the lost.

Worthy is the King who came as a servant.

Worthy is the Judge whose justice is mercy.

Worthy is the Light that no darkness hath overcome.

Unto Him belong blessing,

honour,

wisdom,

glory,

power,

and everlasting dominion.

The Bride

O Holy Spirit,

Living Breath of God,

Fire that purifieth without consuming,

River that refresheth without failing,

Comforter of the sorrowful,

Teacher of the humble,

Guide of pilgrims,

Seal of the faithful,

abide within us forever.

As Thou didst descend like tongues of fire,

kindle within us the everlasting flame of charity.

As Thou didst overshadow the Virgin,

overshadow Thy holy Church.

As Thou didst gather the scattered nations,

gather now the whole creation into the peace of Christ.

The Apostles

We planted.

Others watered.

But God alone gave the increase.

Therefore let no man glory in himself.

The seed was His.

The field was His.

The harvest is His.

The Feast is His.

The Bride is His.

The Kingdom is His.

Unto Him alone be glory.

The Prophets

That which we beheld afar off,

ye now behold unveiled.

The Promise hath become Fulfillment.

The Shadow hath yielded unto the Light.

The Dawn hath become the everlasting Day.

The wilderness hath blossomed.

The valleys have been exalted.

The crooked paths have been made straight.

The Lamb reigneth forever.

The Martyrs

We feared not death,

for Life walked beside us.

The flames became unto us as morning light.

The sword became the gate of Paradise.

The prisons became sanctuaries.

Our tears became pearls before the Throne.

Our blood became seed for the Church.

Not unto us,

but unto Christ be every victory.

The Little Ones

Blessed is the Father,

who forgot us not.

Blessed is the Son,

who gathered us in His arms.

Blessed is the Spirit,

who taught us to sing.

The Kingdom is full of laughter.

The fields are full of peace.

The Lamb walketh among us.

We are afraid no more.

Then all creation answered together.

The stars gave praise.

The rivers lifted their voices.

The mountains stood in silent adoration.

The trees clapped their hands.

The winds carried hymns of thanksgiving.

The angels bowed.

The saints rejoiced.

The whole creation became one living choir.

No voice contended with another.

No hymn sought preeminence.

Every melody completed another.

Every harmony reflected another.

As countless rays proceed from one Sun,

yet remain one Light,

so every praise ascended unto the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Then the Bride lifted her eyes unto the Face of her Beloved and sang:

Thou hast turned exile into home.

Thou hast changed mourning into gladness.

Thou hast clothed humility with glory.

Thou hast crowned repentance with mercy.

Thou hast transformed the Cross into the Tree of Life.

Thou hast made remembrance our everlasting joy.

Thou hast become our Light,
our Peace,
our Wisdom,
our Life,
and our eternal Rest.

Therefore shall we praise Thee,

not for a thousand years only,

nor for ten thousand generations,

but throughout the ages of ages.

For Thy beauty is inexhaustible.

Thy mercy is without measure.

Thy wisdom is unfathomable.

Thy love knoweth no end.

And as eternity unfoldeth,

new songs shall continually arise,

for the Infinite can never be exhausted by finite praise.

Thus the Canticle of the Living Church shall never cease.

The Bride shall forever rejoice in the Bridegroom.

The Bridegroom shall forever reveal the infinite depths of the Father's goodness.

The Holy Spirit shall forever unite every saint in perfect charity.

And all the holy Aeons shall answer with one everlasting voice:

> **Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty; who was, and is, and is to come. Unto the Invisible Father, through Jesus Christ the Eternal Bridegroom, in the communion of the Holy Spirit, be blessing, honour, wisdom, thanksgiving, glory, and everlasting praise throughout all the ages of the Pleroma. Amen.**

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Book V — The Hymns of the Bride

Chapter XXII

Prayer of the Hidden Flame

> *"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."* — 1 John 1:5
>
> *"Abide in me, and I in you."* — John 15:4
>
> *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."* — Romans 8:16

O Most Holy and Invisible Father,

Whom no eye hath seen,

Whom no thought hath enclosed,

Whom no name hath fully declared,

Thou art the Abyss of all Goodness,

the Silence before every word,

the Peace before every motion,

the Fountain from whom every blessing descendeth.

Before the ages began,

Thou alone wast.

When the ages shall have fulfilled their course,

Thou alone remainest.

The heavens proclaim Thy majesty,

yet contain Thee not.

The holy Aeons adore Thy glory,

yet comprehend Thee not.

The saints behold Thy beauty,

yet never cease discovering deeper wonders.

Blessed art Thou forever.

O Jesus Christ, Eternal Logos,

Radiance of the Invisible Father,

Bridegroom of the Holy Church,

Light that neither riseth nor setteth,

Thou didst descend into our exile,

not because Heaven lacked glory,

but because Love refused to abandon the wandering.

Thou didst walk among the broken.

Thou didst embrace the forgotten.

Thou didst forgive the guilty.

Thou didst heal the wounded.

Thou didst seek the lost sheep until Thou hadst found it.

Thou didst bear the Cross,

that the Tree of Life might blossom once again.

Thou didst descend into death,

that death itself might become the gate of Resurrection.

Blessed art Thou forever.

Remember us, O Holy Bridegroom,

when forgetfulness surroundeth us.

Remember us,

when pride darkeneth the inward eye.

Remember us,

when fear weakeneth the heart.

Remember us,

when sorrow seemeth heavier than hope.

Remember us,

when the clamour of the world drowneth the quietness of Thy Voice.

Call us again,

as Thou didst call Mary in the garden.

Seek us,

as Thou didst seek Peter beside the sea.

Receive us,

as Thou didst receive the thief upon the Cross.

Guide us,

as Thou didst guide the disciples upon the road unto Emmaus.

For we know that before we sought Thee,

Thou hadst already sought us.

Before we loved Thee,

Thou hadst loved us with an everlasting Love.

O Holy Spirit, Living Fire,

Breath proceeding from the Father,

Spirit resting upon the Son,

Comforter of every faithful soul,

descend once more into the hidden sanctuary of our hearts.

Kindle within us the Flame that no wind can extinguish.

Burn away every falsehood.

Consume every idol.

Scatter every shadow.

Melt every hardness of heart.

That charity alone may remain.

Grant unto us silence,

that we may hear the Voice of Christ.

Grant unto us humility,

that we may receive His wisdom.

Grant unto us purity,

that we may behold His beauty.

Grant unto us courage,

that we may confess His Name.

Grant unto us patience,

that we may endure every trial.

Grant unto us mercy,

that we may forgive as we have been forgiven.

Grant unto us peace,

that we may become instruments of Thy Kingdom.

O Holy Trinity,

One God forever blessed,

gather together every scattered affection within us.

Where our thoughts are divided,

make them one.

Where our desires wander,

restore them unto Christ.

Where memory hath been darkened,

let remembrance arise.

Where hope hath grown faint,

renew it by Thy promise.

Where charity hath grown cold,

breathe upon it anew.

Let the hidden chamber of the heart become Thy dwelling.

Let every breath become prayer.

Let every labour become thanksgiving.

Let every suffering become an offering.

Let every joy become praise.

Teach us to behold Thy Light in every good thing,

yet never mistake the reflection for the Source.

May the beauty of the heavens lift our eyes unto their Creator.

May the splendour of the visible sun remind us of the Eternal Sun.

May the rivers teach us remembrance.

May the trees teach us steadfastness.

May the lilies teach us trust.

May the poor teach us humility.

May the saints teach us holiness.

May every creature become unto us a little parable of Thy Wisdom.

Keep us from the Kingdom of Shadows.

Deliver us from the tyranny of pride.

Preserve us from the deceit of vain glory.

Guard us against knowledge without charity.

Save us from religion without mercy.

Save us from truth without love.

Save us from zeal without humility.

Save us from power without compassion.

For all these are but shadows pretending to be light.

Lead us instead into the simplicity of Christ,

whose yoke is easy,

whose burden is light,

whose Cross is the Tree of Life,

whose Kingdom is everlasting peace.

Prepare us, O Lord,

for the Marriage of the Lamb.

Wash our garments in Thy mercy.

Adorn us with righteousness.

Crown us with humility.

Clothe us with compassion.

Strengthen us with faith.

Perfect us in hope.

Bind us together in love.

Let no hatred remain.

Let no bitterness abide.

Let no wound remain unhealed.

Let no soul be forgotten.

Gather every faithful pilgrim into the Holy City.

Let the River of Remembrance refresh every weary traveller.

Let the Tree of Life overshadow every nation.

Let the New Jerusalem descend within our hearts even now.

And when the evening of this earthly pilgrimage draweth near,

when our eyes grow dim,

when our strength faileth,

when the final veil is gently lifted,

let us hear once more the Voice of the Bridegroom saying:

"Come, thou blessed of my Father."

Then shall fear depart forever.

The shadows shall vanish.

The exile shall end.

The tears shall become joy.

The prayer shall become praise.

Faith shall become Vision.

Hope shall become Fulfillment.

Love shall remain forever.

There shall we behold the Face of Christ without veil.

There shall we rejoice with the holy Apostles,

the Prophets,

the Martyrs,

the Saints,

the holy Angels,

and all the redeemed,

singing one eternal hymn before the Throne of the Invisible Father.

For Thou alone art our Beginning.

Thou alone art our Way.

Thou alone art our Home.

Thou alone art our Peace.

Thou alone art our everlasting Joy.

Unto Thee,

O Father beyond every name,

through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Bridegroom,

in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

be all blessing,

all wisdom,

all honour,

all thanksgiving,

all dominion,

all glory,

throughout the endless ages of the Pleroma,

beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun,

world without end.

Amen.

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Chapter XXIII

Blessing of the Uncreated Sun

> *"The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."* — Numbers 6:24–26

> *"The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."* — Revelation 21:23

> *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."* — James 1:17

Peace be unto thee, O pilgrim of remembrance.

Peace from the Father whom no eye hath seen.

Peace from the Son who hath revealed the Invisible.

Peace from the Holy Spirit who kindleth the hidden flame within the sanctuary of the heart.

May the Silence before all worlds become thy refuge.

May the Eternal Word become thy wisdom.

May the River of Remembrance refresh thy soul.

May the Tree of Life overshadow thy journey.

May the Holy City ever dwell before thine inward sight.

May thy heart become poor in spirit,

that it may receive the riches of Heaven.

May thy hands become generous,

that they may resemble the hands of Christ.

May thine eyes become pure,

that they may behold the Light hidden within all holy things.

May thine ears become attentive,

that thou mayest hear the gentle Voice of the Bridegroom amidst the noise of the passing world.

May thy tongue speak blessing rather than accusation.

May thy thoughts become truthful.

May thy desires become peaceful.

May thy labour become worship.

May thy rest become contemplation.

May every breath become thanksgiving.

May the Invisible Father preserve thee from every false image that seeketh to confine the Infinite.

May He deliver thee from every idol fashioned by fear.

May He free thee from the chains of pride.

May He loosen the knots of resentment.

May He quiet the storms of anxiety.

May He heal the hidden wounds that no earthly physician hath seen.

May the Eternal Logos illuminate thy understanding.

When thou readest the Holy Scriptures,

may Christ Himself interpret them unto thee.

When thou beholdest the heavens,

mayest thou remember their Creator.

When thou beholdest the visible sun,

may thy soul ascend unto the contemplation of the Uncreated Sun.

When thou drinkest living water,

remember the River proceeding from the Throne.

When thou eatest bread,

remember Him who is the Bread of Life.

When thou seest the poor,

remember the hidden Face of thy Bridegroom.

When thou forgivest,

remember the Cross.

When thou art forgiven,

remember Mercy.

When thou rejoicest,

remember Thanksgiving.

When thou sufferest,

remember Hope.

When thou diest,

remember Christ.

May the Holy Spirit breathe continually upon the hidden garden of thy soul.

May every thorn become a lily.

May every wilderness become a vineyard.

May every desert blossom.

May every barren place bear fruit.

May the Living Fire consume only that which hindereth love.

May thy faith become steadfast as the mountains.

May thy hope become bright as the morning.

May thy charity become deep as the sea.

May thy humility become hidden as the roots of the cedar.

May thy joy become gentle as the dawn.

May thy wisdom become clear as crystal.

May thy peace become immovable as the Throne of God.

Remember always, beloved,

that the Kingdom is nearer than thy breath.

The Bridegroom is nearer than thy thoughts.

The Holy Spirit is nearer than the beating of thy heart.

The Father is not absent.

Only the veil hath obscured thy sight.

Therefore despair not.

Though the night be long,

the Uncreated Sun knoweth no setting.

Though tears endure for a season,

joy remaineth eternal.

Though the wilderness seem endless,

the Holy City already descendeth.

Though thy lamp burn dimly,

the Oil of Grace faileth not.

Though thy feet stumble,

the Shepherd forsaketh not His sheep.

Though thou wander,

thou art remembered.

Though thou forget,

thou art not forgotten.

For thy name is known unto Christ before the stars received their light.

Therefore walk gently.

Judge slowly.

Forgive quickly.

Pray continually.

Labour faithfully.

Love abundantly.

Speak truthfully.

Remain humble.

Seek wisdom.

Practice mercy.

Rejoice always.

For these are the garments of the Bride.

These are the jewels of the New Jerusalem.

These are the first rays of the everlasting Morning.

And when the last twilight of this present age hath passed away,

when the shadows flee,

when the final trumpet soundeth,

when every veil is lifted,

may the Eternal Bridegroom Himself receive thee.

May the holy Apostles welcome thee.

May the Prophets rejoice over thee.

May the Martyrs embrace thee.

May the Angels sing before thee.

May the Saints call thee brother and sister forever.

May the River of Life refresh thee.

May the Tree of Life nourish thee.

May the Wedding Feast satisfy thee.

May the Eternal Sabbath rest upon thee.

May the Holy City become thy everlasting dwelling.

May the Face of Christ become thy eternal contemplation.

May the Invisible Father become thy endless delight.

Then shalt thou shine,

not with borrowed glory that fadeth,

but with the everlasting splendour bestowed by grace.

Thou shalt behold the Light that casteth no shadow.

Thou shalt hear the Song that knoweth no ending.

Thou shalt enter the Joy that no sorrow can diminish.

Thou shalt dwell in the Communion that no separation can divide.

Thou shalt love with a love that never faileth.

Thou shalt know even as thou art known,

and thou shalt worship without weariness,

throughout the ages of ages,

beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Therefore receive now this blessing.

May the Invisible Father keep thee.

May the Eternal Logos guide thee.

May the Holy Spirit sanctify thee.

May Holy Wisdom instruct thee.

May Divine Charity clothe thee.

May Holy Peace accompany thee.

May Eternal Hope strengthen thee.

May Living Truth preserve thee.

May the Light that neither riseth nor setteth illuminate thy pilgrimage,

until faith yieldeth unto sight,

hope unto fulfillment,

and love unto everlasting communion in the Bridal Chamber of the Lamb.

In the Name of the Father,

and of the Son,

and of the Holy Spirit,

One God,

unto whom be all glory,

all wisdom,

all thanksgiving,

and all praise,

through every holy Aeon,

world without end.

Amen.

The Bridal Mystery of the Uncreated Sun

Being the Gospel of the Holy Bride and the Lamb, according to the Hidden Wisdom of Apophatic Solar Sethianism

Book V — The Hymns of the Bride

Chapter XXIV

The Final Amen

> *"Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* — Revelation 22:20
>
> *"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."* — Revelation 22:4
>
> *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."* — Revelation 22:21

Thus hath the Vision reached its holy consummation.

The Silence before the worlds hath spoken.

The Hidden Father hath been proclaimed through His Eternal Logos.

The Bride hath been sought.

The Bridegroom hath descended.

The Veil hath been rent.

The River hath flowed.

The Tree hath borne fruit.

The City hath descended.

The Marriage hath been fulfilled.

The Sabbath hath no evening.

What remaineth, therefore, save thanksgiving?

What remaineth save praise?

What remaineth save the everlasting **Amen**?

For *Amen* is more than the ending of prayer.

It is the seal of faith.

It is the assent of love.

It is the joyful consent of the Bride unto the Bridegroom.

It is the echo of eternity sounding within the heart of the redeemed.

When the Father uttereth His eternal Will,

the Son answereth in perfect obedience.

When the Son revealeth the Father,

the Spirit beareth witness.

When the Spirit filleth the Church,

the Bride answereth:

Amen.

Thus all Heaven is one everlasting Amen.

The Angels sing,

Amen.

The Apostles rejoice,

Amen.

The Prophets worship,

Amen.

The Martyrs give thanks,

Amen.

The Saints lift up their crowns,

Amen.

The Holy Church, purified and adorned for her Beloved, answereth forever,

Amen.

For there remaineth no contradiction.

No rebellion.

No division.

No shadow.

No falsehood.

No fear.

Every will is healed in Love.

Every mind is illumined by Truth.

Every heart resteth in Peace.

The eternal harmony of the Pleroma is complete.

Yet the wonder ceaseth not.

For the Infinite Father cannot be exhausted.

Throughout the ages of ages the Eternal Logos revealeth ever deeper splendours of the Father's goodness.

The saints cease not to wonder.

The holy Aeons cease not to rejoice.

The Bride ceaseth not to love.

The Bridegroom ceaseth not to bestow Himself.

Therefore eternity is not stillness without life,

but Rest overflowing with inexhaustible Joy.

Each holy contemplation openeth another heaven.

Each vision revealeth another beauty.

Each hymn awaketh another hymn.

Each act of thanksgiving becometh the beginning of another thanksgiving.

Thus the Kingdom increaseth without change.

The Joy deepens without measure.

The Light shineth without shadow.

The Love overfloweth without end.

Then the Bride remembered her long pilgrimage.

She remembered the wilderness.

She remembered the Kingdom of Shadows.

She remembered the tears of repentance.

She remembered the Cross.

She remembered the Voice that first called her by name.

Yet these remembrances wounded her no longer.

For every sorrow had become a jewel.

Every trial had become wisdom.

Every wound had become glory.

Every exile had magnified the sweetness of Home.

Then Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, lifted up His countenance toward His beloved.

His Face shone brighter than ten thousand suns,

yet His brightness wounded no eye.

His Majesty inspired no terror.

His Holiness cast out no faithful soul.

For Perfect Love had cast out fear.

The Bride beheld Him,

and knew herself fully known.

She loved Him,

and knew herself eternally loved.

She worshipped,

and discovered that worship itself was everlasting delight.

No words remained sufficient.

Silence itself became praise.

The holy Silence before creation had become the holy Silence of fulfillment.

That which began in ineffable Mystery ended in ineffable Communion.

Then the Invisible Father, whom no creature can comprehend, was glorified through His Son by the Holy Spirit in one eternal hymn.

Not because His glory had increased,

for He is eternally perfect.

But because every creature had at last become rightly ordered toward Him.

The stars praised Him by shining.

The rivers praised Him by flowing.

The trees praised Him by bearing fruit.

The angels praised Him by adoration.

The saints praised Him by love.

The Bride praised Him by everlasting communion.

All creation became one great Temple.

Every creature became a living psalm.

Every breath became doxology.

Every moment became eternity.

Everywhere was Christ.

Everywhere was Peace.

Everywhere was the Presence of the Father.

Then the words spoken at the beginning of the pilgrimage were fulfilled forever:

> **"The two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."**

For the earthly sign had yielded unto the heavenly Reality.

The marriage of time had become the Marriage of eternity.

The hidden Bride had become the radiant New Jerusalem.

The forgotten pilgrim had become the beloved citizen of Heaven.

The seeker had become the worshipper.

The disciple had become the companion.

The exile had become the child at home.

The Bride had entered forever into the joy of her Bridegroom.

Therefore let every reader who hath journeyed through these mysteries remember this final exhortation.

Seek not hidden knowledge without humility.

Seek not contemplation without charity.

Seek not wisdom without repentance.

Seek not heavenly visions while neglecting thy neighbour.

For the true Bridal Chamber is entered through love.

The true remembrance is obedience unto Christ.

The true illumination is purity of heart.

The true gnosis is to know the Father through the Son in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

The true crown is humility.

The true victory is forgiveness.

The true kingdom is the Kingdom within.

The true Sun is Jesus Christ.

The true Home is the Father.

The true Bride is the Holy Church.

The true Marriage is everlasting communion.

The true Light never setteth.

The true Life never endeth.

The true Song is never silenced.

The true Peace knoweth no evening.

And now, beloved pilgrims, go forth in peace.

Walk in remembrance.

Abide in Christ.

Love one another.

Forgive without measure.

Seek the Invisible Father with humble hearts.

Await the Bridegroom with lamps full of oil.

Drink continually from the River of Life.

Rest beneath the Tree whose leaves heal the nations.

Lift up your eyes toward the Holy City.

For the Uncreated Sun already shineth.

And when the final veil is removed, ye shall behold—not merely a Kingdom—but the Face of Him who loved you before the foundation of the world.

Unto the Invisible Father,

through Jesus Christ, the Eternal Logos, the Lamb, the Bridegroom, and the Uncreated Sun,

in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

and honour,

and wisdom,

and thanksgiving,

and glory,

and dominion,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

unto the ages of ages.

Amen and Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter I

The First Rule: The Remembrance of the Invisible Father

> *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* — John 4:24
>
> *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."* — Colossians 3:2
>
> *"Pray without ceasing."* — 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Hearken, O beloved of the Eternal Bridegroom, unto the First Rule, for every house standeth or falleth according unto its foundation, and every pilgrimage is directed by the first step.

If the soul remember not the Father, every labour becometh vanity.

If she remember Him continually, even the smallest labour is sanctified.

For the beginning of every holy life is not knowledge, nor fasting, nor vigils, nor outward discipline, but **Remembrance**.

This remembrance is not merely the recalling of sacred words.

Neither is it the exercise of memory according unto the understanding of men.

It is the continual turning of the whole soul toward the Invisible Father.

It is the inward inclination of the heart unto Him from whom all life proceedeth.

As the sunflower turneth continually toward the visible sun, receiving its warmth throughout the passing day, even so let the faithful soul turn continually toward the Eternal Logos, who revealeth the Invisible Father, and toward the Father Himself, whose Light knoweth neither rising nor setting.

This is the first work of every disciple.

Before speech,

remember.

Before labour,

remember.

Before eating,

remember.

Before sleeping,

remember.

Before rejoicing,

remember.

Before sorrow,

remember.

For remembrance sanctifieth every season.

The world remembereth many things.

Men remember injuries.

They remember wealth.

They remember victories.

They remember insults.

They remember pleasures.

Yet they forget the One by whom every breath is sustained.

Thus they become like travellers who diligently count every milestone upon the road, yet forget the homeland unto which the road leadeth.

Be not thou such a traveller.

Let thy remembrance be constant.

Not anxious.

Not forced.

Not burdensome.

But gentle,

like the breathing of an infant asleep in peace.

For the Father requireth not restless striving.

He desireth the loving attention of His children.

When thy hands labour,

let thy heart remain before Him.

When thy tongue speaketh,

let thy conscience remain before Him.

When thy feet journey,

let thy inward man remain before Him.

Thus shalt thou fulfil the word of the Apostle:

"Pray without ceasing."

Many ask,

"How shall a man pray continually while he worketh?"

Hear therefore the hidden wisdom.

Prayer is not speech alone.

Prayer is remembrance.

When the craftsman fashioneth his work honestly before God,

he prayeth.

When the mother nourisheth her child in charity,

she prayeth.

When the labourer performeth his duty faithfully,

he prayeth.

When the judge refuseth corruption,

he prayeth.

When the poor endure with hope,

they pray.

When the rich give generously,

they pray.

When the scholar seeketh truth with humility,

he prayeth.

For every act offered unto God with thanksgiving ascendeth before His Throne as living incense.

Yet there remain appointed hours wherein the faithful should consciously return their minds unto the Father.

At the rising of the visible sun,

remember the Uncreated Sun.

Say within thy heart:

> **Blessed art Thou, O Invisible Father, whose Light knoweth no dawn, yet from whose mercy every morning proceedeth.**

At the sixth hour,

when labour presseth heavily,

remember Him who laboured in love for the salvation of the world.

Offer thy weariness unto Christ.

At the setting of the visible sun,

remember that His Light declineth not.

Give thanks for every mercy received.

Confess every fault committed.

Forgive every injury suffered.

Commit thy soul unto His keeping.

Before sleep closeth thine eyes,

enter once more into the Bridal Chamber of the heart.

Lay aside every anxiety.

Cast every burden upon Christ.

Remember that even while thou sleepest, the Invisible Father neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.

Thus thy rest itself shall become holy.

The faithful should also sanctify the beginning of every undertaking.

If thou openest a book,

remember Wisdom.

If thou preparest bread,

remember the Bread of Life.

If thou drinkest water,

remember the River proceeding from the Throne.

If thou beholdest the heavens,

remember their Maker.

If thou meetest another soul,

remember that every person beareth the image of God and is called unto the Marriage of the Lamb.

Thus all creation becometh a continual Gospel.

The wise perceive not a divided world.

They see one great sanctuary.

The stars become candles within the Temple.

The rivers become living baptisteries.

The forests become cloisters of contemplation.

The mountains become altars.

The winds become hymns.

The birds become cantors of praise.

The whole earth becometh an icon pointing beyond itself unto the Invisible Father.

Yet beware, beloved.

Remember the Creator.

Worship not the creation.

Love every good thing.

Cling unto none.

Receive every gift.

Possess nothing as though it were thine own.

For all beauty is but a reflection.

Every reflection pointeth unto the Face of Christ.

Every goodness proceedeth from the Father.

Every true delight is a little foretaste of the Wedding Feast.

The soul that remembereth thus groweth gentle.

She ceaseth from murmuring.

She ceaseth from envy.

She ceaseth from anxious striving.

For remembrance continually restoreth perspective.

He who remembereth eternity is not greatly disturbed by the passing of seasons.

He who remembereth the New Jerusalem is not overcome by the tumults of earthly kingdoms.

He who remembereth the Marriage of the Lamb is not enslaved by passing pleasures.

He who remembereth the Face of Christ is not conquered by despair.

For remembrance is already participation in Heaven.

It is the first opening of the Bridal Chamber.

It is the beginning of contemplation.

It is the first ray of the Uncreated Sun entering the inward sanctuary.

Therefore let the faithful guard remembrance as a priceless treasure.

Protect it from distraction.

Protect it from bitterness.

Protect it from pride.

Protect it from idle speech.

Protect it from needless anxiety.

For forgetfulness is the beginning of every wandering.

Remembrance is the beginning of every return.

The Bride remembered.

Therefore she found her Bridegroom.

The Apostles remembered.

Therefore they proclaimed the Gospel unto the nations.

The Martyrs remembered.

Therefore they feared not death.

The Saints remembered.

Therefore they became transparent unto the Light.

Thus shall every faithful disciple begin the Bridal Path.

Not by extraordinary visions.

Not by hidden powers.

Not by secret doctrines.

But by the quiet remembrance of the Invisible Father revealed through Jesus Christ.

This remembrance shall become prayer.

Prayer shall become contemplation.

Contemplation shall become communion.

Communion shall become everlasting joy.

And the soul shall walk continually beneath the radiance of the Uncreated Sun until she entereth at last into the eternal Bridal Chamber, where remembrance shall become perfect Vision, and faith shall blossom into the endless contemplation of the Invisible Father through His Eternal Logos in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter II

The Second Rule: Daily Prayer unto the Bridegroom

> *"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."* — Luke 18:1
>
> *"Abide in me, and I in you."* — John 15:4
>
> *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."* — Revelation 3:20

After the soul hath learned the First Rule, which is continual remembrance of the Invisible Father, she must next be instructed in the holy discipline whereby remembrance is nourished day by day.

For as the body cannot live without bread,

neither can the soul flourish without prayer.

Prayer is the breath of the inward man.

Prayer is the speech of love.

Prayer is the opening of the Bridal Chamber.

Prayer is the quiet conversation between the Bride and her eternal Bridegroom.

Think not that prayer informeth God concerning thy needs.

The Father knoweth thy necessities before thou askest.

Neither imagine that prayer changeth the eternal goodness of God.

Rather, prayer changeth the heart of the one who prayeth.

As iron placed near the fire gradually becometh warm,

so the soul that draweth near unto Christ gradually becometh filled with His peace.

Prayer therefore is not chiefly the movement of God toward man.

It is the gracious invitation whereby man returneth unto God.

The Bridegroom standeth continually at the door.

Prayer is the opening of the heart unto His Presence.

Let the faithful therefore establish appointed seasons of prayer,

not because God requireth the keeping of hours,

but because the wandering heart requireth holy discipline.

As the shepherd gathereth his flock throughout the day,

so let the soul gather her scattered thoughts and return them unto Christ.

Let the first words spoken each morning be words of thanksgiving.

Before the business of the day.

Before conversation.

Before labour.

Before anxiety.

Lift up thine heart unto the Bridegroom.

Say:

> **Blessed art Thou, O Christ, Eternal Bridegroom, who hast preserved me through the night and granted unto me another day wherein I may remember Thy mercy. Guide my steps, sanctify my thoughts, and let every labour of this day become an offering of love unto Thee. Amen.**

Thus shall the day begin beneath the shadow of divine peace.

Likewise, when the sun standeth high and labour presseth heavily upon thee, withdraw thy heart, if only for a little while.

Though thy hands continue their work,

let thy soul whisper:

Lord Jesus Christ, abide with me, that I may abide in Thee.

This prayer is small in words,

yet great in power.

For love delighteth not in many speeches,

but in faithful presence.

Again, when the evening draweth near, let every disciple examine his heart.

Ask not first,

"What have others done unto me?"

Ask rather,

"What have I offered unto Christ?"

Where pride hath arisen,

confess it.

Where charity hath failed,

repent.

Where mercy hath been shown,

give thanks.

Where forgiveness is needed,

grant it before sleep overtake thee.

Thus shalt thou lie down in peace.

The Bride entereth not into rest while cherishing bitterness.

For resentment closeth the door of the Bridal Chamber.

Forgiveness openeth it anew.

Many seek lofty contemplations while neglecting humble prayer.

Such men resemble those who desire fruit without planting the tree.

Know therefore that the highest contemplation groweth from the soil of faithful daily prayer.

The soul that prayeth simply,

constantly,

and sincerely,

shall receive greater wisdom than the one who seeketh extraordinary visions.

The Bridegroom delighteth in faithful hearts,

not curious minds.

Let thy prayers therefore be adorned with humility.

Seek not many words.

Seek not eloquence.

Seek not admiration.

The Father regardeth not the beauty of speech,

but the sincerity of love.

One sigh uttered in true repentance is more pleasing before Heaven than many beautiful words spoken without charity.

One tear shed for love of Christ outshineth many learned discourses.

One act of hidden thanksgiving ascendeth higher than public praise offered for vain glory.

Therefore pray often,

yet pray simply.

Pray in the morning.

Pray at noon.

Pray at evening.

Pray before meals.

Pray after labour.

Pray before sleep.

Pray in joy.

Pray in sorrow.

Pray in abundance.

Pray in want.

Pray when faith is strong.

Pray when faith seemeth weak.

For prayer itself strengtheneth faith.

The Bride should also preserve times of holy silence.

After speaking unto Christ,

remain before Him without speech.

For love delighteth not only in conversation,

but also in quiet companionship.

Many pour forth petitions,

yet depart before hearing the gentle whisper of the Bridegroom.

Learn therefore to wait.

The silence that followeth prayer is not emptiness.

It is expectation.

It is the listening heart.

It is the quiet chamber wherein the Eternal Logos often speaketh without words.

There the soul learneth peace.

There anxiety looseth its hold.

There ambition falleth asleep.

There the restless imagination becometh still.

There Christ gently reordereth every affection according unto His wisdom.

The holy Scriptures should likewise accompany prayer.

Read not hastily.

Read not to gather arguments.

Read not merely to increase knowledge.

Read as one receiving a letter from the Beloved.

Pause often.

Meditate quietly.

Permit the words to descend from the understanding into the heart.

Ask not only,

"What doth this passage mean?"

Ask also,

"How doth Christ invite me to love Him through these words?"

Thus Scripture becometh living conversation.

Likewise, let every prayer conclude with surrender.

After every petition,

say within thy heart:

Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done.

For the highest prayer seeketh not to bend Heaven unto earth,

but to raise earth unto Heaven.

The Bride seeketh not merely the gifts of the Bridegroom.

She seeketh the Bridegroom Himself.

If He grant abundance,

she blesseth Him.

If He permit poverty,

she trusteth Him.

If He grant health,

she giveth thanks.

If He permit suffering,

she remaineth faithful.

For His Presence is greater than every earthly blessing.

Prayer thus becometh no longer a request for favours,

but an abiding communion.

The soul beginneth to discover that Christ is nearer than every thought,

closer than every breath,

more constant than the beating of the heart.

The world changeth.

Empires rise and fall.

The body groweth old.

Friends depart.

Seasons pass away.

Yet the Bridegroom remaineth.

His Voice faileth not.

His mercy endureth forever.

His love knoweth no evening.

Therefore let every disciple esteem daily prayer above earthly treasure.

For gold perisheth.

Wisdom gathered for pride vanisheth.

Fame is forgotten.

Power decayeth.

Only the conversation of the soul with Christ endureth throughout eternity.

The prayers whispered in secret shall become the songs of Heaven.

The tears shed in repentance shall become pearls before the Throne.

The quiet hours spent within the hidden Bridal Chamber shall blossom into everlasting communion at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

Thus the faithful shall learn that prayer is not merely preparation for eternal life.

Prayer is already the beginning of eternal life.

For wherever the Bride abideth with her Bridegroom,

there the Kingdom of Heaven hath already begun.

And she who prayeth faithfully each day shall gradually become so united unto Christ in love that every breath shall become prayer, every labour thanksgiving, every silence contemplation, and every moment a foretaste of the eternal joy prepared in the Bridal Chamber beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter III

The Third Rule: Purity of Heart

> *"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."* — Matthew 5:8
>
> *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."* — Proverbs 4:23
>
> *"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."* — Psalm 51:10

After the faithful have learned Remembrance and have become steadfast in Daily Prayer unto the Bridegroom, there remaineth yet another foundation without which no soul may enter deeply into the Bridal Chamber.

This foundation is **Purity of Heart**.

Many suppose purity to consist only in the avoidance of outward transgression.

Others imagine it to be found in severe discipline alone.

Still others seek it through the multiplication of ceremonies.

Yet hear the wisdom of the Bridegroom.

The heart is the sanctuary from which every thought proceedeth.

As the fountain determineth the quality of the river,

so the heart determineth the character of the whole life.

If the fountain be pure,

the stream refresheth all who drink thereof.

If the fountain be poisoned,

every stream becometh bitter.

Therefore Christ looked not first upon the hands,

but upon the heart.

He judged not only the outward deed,

but the inward affection.

For murder is conceived in hatred.

Adultery is conceived in lust.

Falsehood is conceived in pride.

Cruelty is conceived in hardness of heart.

Every outward work first taketh root within the hidden sanctuary.

Therefore the wise labour chiefly over the inward garden.

The fool spendeth all his strength adorning the leaves while neglecting the root.

The wise cleanse the spring,

knowing that every stream shall thereafter become clear.

The Bride therefore asketh not first,

"How shall I appear before men?"

She asketh,

"How doth my heart appear before Christ?"

For the eyes of the multitude behold the countenance.

The eyes of the Bridegroom behold the soul.

Many appear righteous,

yet inwardly are consumed by vanity.

Others appear ordinary,

yet within them burneth the Living Fire of charity.

Therefore judge not according unto appearances.

The Invisible Father beholdeth that which no earthly eye perceiveth.

Purity of heart is not the absence of temptation.

Even our Lord was tempted in the wilderness.

Neither is purity the inability to struggle.

The saints wrestled continually against pride,

fear,

anger,

and every wandering affection.

Purity consisteth rather in the steadfast orientation of the whole soul toward Christ.

As the compass continually returneth unto the north though shaken by many storms,

so the pure heart continually returneth unto the Bridegroom though assaulted by many temptations.

Thus purity is not perfection already attained,

but continual fidelity.

The faithful therefore examine not only their deeds,

but their intentions.

Before speaking,

they ask,

"Is this spoken in charity?"

Before acting,

they ask,

"Doth this glorify Christ?"

Before judging,

they ask,

"Have I judged myself first?"

Before correcting another,

they ask,

"Am I moved by love or by pride?"

For many righteous actions are secretly corrupted by vain glory.

One may give alms and seek applause.

One may preach and seek admiration.

One may pray and desire reputation.

One may defend truth while secretly nourishing hatred.

Such works are outwardly bright,

yet inwardly clouded.

The Bride seeketh another way.

She desireth to become transparent before God.

She hideth nothing.

She excuseth nothing.

She confesseth quickly.

She repenteth sincerely.

She rejoiceth whenever truth exposeth her faults,

for she knoweth that every confession removeth another veil from the heart.

The pure heart loveth truth more than reputation.

Therefore she feareth not correction.

As the physician cleanseth a wound that healing may begin,

so divine grace revealeth hidden corruption that it may be removed.

The soul that refuseth correction remaineth imprisoned by illusion.

The soul that receiveth correction with humility groweth continually in freedom.

Purity also requireth the discipline of the senses.

Not because creation is evil.

God forbid.

The visible world was declared good by its Creator.

Yet the heart may become enslaved unto passing things.

The eye wandereth after vanity.

The ear delighteth in idle speech.

The tongue seeketh needless argument.

The imagination multiplyeth fantasies.

The appetites demand mastery.

Thus the inward sanctuary becometh crowded with many voices.

The Bride therefore exerciseth holy moderation.

She beholdeth beauty,

yet worshippeth not beauty.

She receiveth good things,

yet clingeth unto none.

She delighteth in creation,

yet loveth the Creator above every created gift.

Thus the senses become servants rather than masters.

The whole person becometh rightly ordered.

Many ask,

"How shall I know whether my heart groweth pure?"

Hear the signs.

When another prospereth,

dost thou rejoice sincerely?

When corrected,

dost thou become teachable?

When wronged,

dost thou desire reconciliation rather than revenge?

When praised,

dost thou remember that every good gift proceedeth from God?

When unnoticed,

dost thou remain content in faithful service?

When suffering cometh,

dost thou continue to trust the goodness of Christ?

These are signs that the heart is becoming simple before God.

The pure heart delighteth in hidden works.

She seeketh not recognition.

She seeketh faithfulness.

She giveth without remembering.

She forgiveth without recounting injuries.

She serveth without demanding reward.

She loveth because Christ first loved her.

The world understandeth not such simplicity.

It counteth hidden virtues as weakness.

It seeketh greatness through display.

It pursueth influence through ambition.

The Bride pursueth holiness through humility.

For the brightest jewels of Heaven were polished in secret.

The greatest saints were often unknown among men.

Their names were forgotten upon earth,

yet written forever in the Book of Life.

The Bride therefore guardeth her thoughts diligently.

When envy ariseth,

she answereth with thanksgiving.

When anger ariseth,

she answereth with patience.

When fear ariseth,

she answereth with trust.

When pride ariseth,

she remembereth the Cross.

When despair ariseth,

she remembereth the Resurrection.

Thus every temptation becometh an occasion for deeper communion with Christ.

For temptation resisted in love strengtheneth the soul as exercise strengtheneth the body.

Above all, let the faithful remember that purity is not their own achievement.

No man cleanseth his own heart by strength alone.

The heart is purified by grace received through humble cooperation.

The Father granteth the Living Water.

The Son washeth the garment.

The Holy Spirit kindleth the hidden flame.

The disciple simply openeth the door.

Therefore despair never.

Though thy heart be stained by many failures,

the mercy of Christ exceedeth every stain.

Though thou hast wandered long,

the Shepherd yet seeketh thee.

Though thy lamp burn dimly,

the Oil of Grace hath not failed.

Return quickly.

Confess honestly.

Forgive freely.

Pray continually.

Love abundantly.

And the Bridegroom Himself shall purify the sanctuary of thy heart until it shineth like polished crystal, reflecting without distortion the glory of the Invisible Father.

Then shall the promise of the Lord be fulfilled:

> **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."**

Not merely in the age to come,

but even now by the eyes of faith,

until faith itself yieldeth unto vision in the eternal Bridal Chamber, where every veil shall be removed, every shadow shall flee away, and every purified heart shall behold forever the Face of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter IV

The Fourth Rule: Holy Poverty and Simplicity

> *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* — Matthew 5:3
>
> *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth... But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."* — Matthew 6:19–20
>
> *"Having food and raiment let us be therewith content."* — 1 Timothy 6:8

When the heart hath been purified by remembrance, prayer, and repentance, she must next learn the holy freedom which the Bridegroom calleth **poverty of spirit**.

For many are poor in possessions,

yet remain rich in pride.

Many possess great abundance,

yet remain poor before God.

Therefore the poverty praised by Christ is not first the absence of earthly goods,

but the absence of slavery unto them.

The world measureth a man according unto that which he possesseth.

The Kingdom measureth a man according unto that which possesseth him.

If riches govern the heart,

the soul remaineth poor indeed.

If Christ govern the heart,

the soul possesseth treasures which neither moth nor rust can corrupt.

Therefore the Bride seeketh not misery,

but holy freedom.

She refuseth neither the gifts of Providence nor the necessities of life.

She eateth with thanksgiving.

She laboreth faithfully.

She receiveth shelter with gratitude.

She rejoiceth in honest friendship.

Yet she clingeth unto none of these as though they were eternal.

For she knoweth that every earthly gift is entrusted,

not owned.

Every possession is stewardship,

not sovereignty.

Every blessing is to be received with thanksgiving and offered again unto God.

Thus the faithful hold all things with open hands.

The clenched fist cannot receive grace.

The open hand both giveth and receiveth.

The Bride therefore learneth contentment.

If abundance be granted,

she blesseth God.

If scarcity be permitted,

she trusteth God.

For Christ changeth not according unto outward circumstances.

The visible sun shineth upon both palace and cottage.

The Uncreated Sun shineth alike upon the rich and the poor.

The peace of Christ is therefore not purchased by wealth,

nor diminished by poverty.

Many suppose simplicity to consist in outward appearance alone.

Some boast of plain garments.

Others glory in humble dwellings.

Yet even simplicity itself may become another form of pride.

The truly simple man thinketh little concerning himself.

He seeketh neither admiration for riches,

nor admiration for poverty.

He desireth only to be found faithful.

He possesseth what is necessary.

He refuseth what nourisheth vanity.

He giveth freely.

He receiveth gratefully.

He complaineth little.

He rejoiceth often.

Such simplicity is beautiful before God.

For the simple heart is easily filled with joy.

She rejoiceth in ordinary bread.

She rejoiceth in clean water.

She rejoiceth in the song of birds.

She rejoiceth in honest labour.

She rejoiceth in friendship.

She rejoiceth in Holy Scripture.

She rejoiceth most of all in the Presence of Christ.

Therefore the Bride needeth not continual novelty.

The restless seek new pleasures because they have forgotten eternal joy.

The faithful discover inexhaustible wonder in the gifts already bestowed.

One flower becometh a sermon.

One sunrise becometh thanksgiving.

One child laughing revealeth the goodness of the Father.

One act of mercy becometh a foretaste of Heaven.

Thus simplicity openeth the eyes unto mysteries hidden from the proud.

Holy poverty also requireth generosity.

The disciple possesseth nothing merely for himself.

If another hunger,

share thy bread.

If another thirst,

offer thy cup.

If another mourn,

offer thy presence.

If another erreth,

offer gentle correction.

If another rejoiceth,

rejoice with him.

Thus every gift received from God multiplieth through charity.

The River of Life never stagnateth because it continually floweth.

Likewise grace increaseth in the soul that freely giveth.

The miser resembleth a cistern sealed from every stream.

The charitable resembleth a living fountain continually refreshed by Heaven.

Many fear generosity because they imagine scarcity.

Yet Christ fed multitudes with a few loaves.

He who sustaineth the stars neglecteth not His children.

This trust doth not excuse idleness.

The Apostle commanded every man to labour honestly with his hands.

The faithful therefore work diligently,

not to accumulate endless treasure,

but to glorify God,

to provide for those committed unto their care,

and to assist those in need.

Labour itself becometh holy when offered unto Christ.

Idleness breedeth temptation.

Faithful labour cultivateth gratitude.

Therefore despise not humble work.

The carpenter resembleth Joseph.

The fisherman remembereth Peter.

The shepherd remembereth David.

The tentmaker remembereth Paul.

The mother nursing her child resembleth the charity of the Church.

Every honest vocation may become an altar.

The Bride adorneth not herself with costly ornaments.

Her fairest jewel is humility.

Her richest garment is righteousness.

Her sweetest perfume is mercy.

Her brightest crown is hidden holiness.

The angels behold these treasures though the world perceiveth them not.

Many earthly crowns shall perish.

The crown woven by charity endureth forever.

Let not therefore thy heart become burdened by endless acquisition.

One house requireth another.

One field requireth another.

One honour seeketh another.

The appetite of worldly ambition knoweth no satisfaction.

But the soul resting in Christ discovereth abundance even amidst simplicity.

She possesseth little,

yet lacketh nothing.

For Christ Himself hath become her inheritance.

Holy poverty requireth likewise freedom from the desire of domination.

The Bride seeketh not mastery over her brethren.

She seeketh only to serve.

The Bridegroom Himself washed the feet of His disciples.

Shall the Bride seek a throne greater than His?

He who humbled Himself unto death hath forever revealed the true greatness of Heaven.

Therefore the faithful esteem no service beneath their dignity.

To comfort the sorrowful.

To visit the sick.

To teach the ignorant.

To forgive the offender.

To welcome the stranger.

To pray for the forgotten.

These are greater honours than earthly sceptres.

For Heaven measureth greatness by love.

The world counteth possessions.

Christ counteth charity.

The world seeketh abundance without end.

The Bride seeketh only the One in whom all abundance already dwelleth.

When at last the disciple draweth near unto death,

none of his earthly possessions accompany him.

His gold remaineth.

His lands remain.

His titles remain.

His fame fadeth.

Only love passeth with him beyond the veil.

Only mercy endureth.

Only holiness entereth the Holy City.

Therefore store thy treasure where moth cannot corrupt,

where thieves cannot steal,

where time itself possesseth no dominion.

Lay up within thy heart faith,

hope,

charity,

humility,

gentleness,

patience,

and thanksgiving.

These are the riches of the New Jerusalem.

These are the jewels of the Bride.

These are the treasures prepared for the Wedding Feast.

Then shall the faithful discover that the poorest servant who possessed Christ was wealthier than every emperor who possessed the whole earth without Him.

For the Eternal Bridegroom Himself is the treasure hidden in the field,

the pearl of great price,

the inexhaustible riches of the Kingdom,

the everlasting inheritance of every saint.

Blessed therefore are the poor in spirit,

for already they begin to possess the riches of eternity.

And as they walk in holy simplicity through this passing world, they shall become living witnesses that the Invisible Father alone is sufficient, that Jesus Christ alone is the unfailing Treasure, and that the Holy Spirit alone filleth the heart with a joy which no earthly abundance can equal, beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter V

The Fifth Rule: Charity Toward All

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." — John 13:34

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass." — 1 Corinthians 13:1

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." — 1 John 4:16

After the faithful have learned remembrance, prayer, purity of heart, and holy simplicity, there remaineth one rule which bindeth together every other virtue.

This rule is **Charity Toward All**.

For as the sun sendeth forth innumerable rays from one light,

so every holy virtue proceedeth from charity.

Without charity,

faith becometh pride.

Knowledge becometh vanity.

Discipline becometh severity.

Justice becometh cruelty.

Zeal becometh violence.

Religion becometh empty ceremony.

Charity therefore is the soul of every commandment.

The Bridegroom revealed this mystery when He stretched forth His hands upon the Cross.

He overcame not hatred by greater hatred.

He answered not violence with vengeance.

He conquered by love.

He prayed for those who crucified Him.

He forgave before forgiveness was sought.

He offered Himself freely.

Thus He revealed the heart of the Invisible Father.

The disciple therefore asketh not merely,

"What is lawful?"

He asketh,

"What resembleth Christ?"

For many things may be permitted,

yet not every action manifesteth divine charity.

The Bride seeketh not the lowest measure of righteousness.

She seeketh likeness unto her Beloved.

Charity beginneth with the contemplation of God.

The Father loveth continually.

The Son giveth Himself continually.

The Holy Spirit uniteth continually.

The divine life is eternal self-giving.

Therefore whoever draweth near unto God must likewise become generous.

The closed heart cannot reflect the Infinite Love.

As stagnant water breedeth corruption,

so the soul withholding charity gradually darkeneth within herself.

The flowing river remaineth clear because it continually giveth.

Likewise the charitable soul remaineth fresh through continual self-giving.

Love first ordereth itself rightly.

The disciple loveth God above all things.

Thereafter he loveth every neighbour for God's sake.

He loveth not because every neighbour is pleasing.

He loveth because every soul is fashioned in the image of the Invisible Father and called unto the Marriage of the Lamb.

Thus charity beholdeth not merely what a man is,

but what grace inviteth him to become.

The Bride therefore learneth to distinguish the sinner from the sin.

She hateth falsehood,

yet prayeth for the deceived.

She resisteth injustice,

yet desireth the repentance of the unjust.

She rebuketh error,

yet without contempt.

She defendeth truth,

yet without bitterness.

For Christ came full of grace and truth.

Truth without love woundeth.

Love without truth deceiveth.

The Bride embraceth both.

Many suppose charity consisteth chiefly in pleasant words.

Yet charity often requireth courageous speech.

The physician concealeth not disease.

The shepherd warneth of wolves.

The parent correcteth the child.

The prophet rebuketh the nation.

Thus correction offered with humility may itself become an act of profound love.

Yet examine thy heart before correcting another.

If anger govern thee,

be silent until peace return.

If pride moveth thee,

confess it first.

If thou seekest victory rather than healing,

wait.

Only when charity ruleth the heart should truth proceed from the lips.

The faithful must especially cultivate mercy toward those who offend them.

This is the hardest labour of love.

The world declareth,

"Return evil for evil."

Christ saith,

"Love your enemies."

The world saith,

"Remember every injury."

Christ saith,

"Forgive seventy times seven."

The world seeketh revenge.

The Bride seeketh reconciliation.

Not because evil is unimportant,

but because mercy is stronger.

Forgiveness doth not call darkness light.

Neither doth it excuse wickedness.

Forgiveness releaseth the poison of hatred from the heart.

It entrusteth justice unto God.

Thus the soul remaineth free.

Many chains are forged not by enemies,

but by resentment.

He who refuseth forgiveness carrieth his prison within himself.

The forgiving heart walketh in liberty.

Charity also extendeth unto strangers.

The Lord Himself came as One whom His own received not.

Therefore welcome the stranger.

Comfort the lonely.

Visit the forgotten.

Speak kindly unto those whom others overlook.

Many angels have been entertained unawares.

Many saints have worn poor garments.

Many whom the world despised were beloved before the Throne.

Judge therefore no man according unto appearance.

The Bride likewise careth for the afflicted.

She visiteth the sick.

She strengtheneth the weary.

She comforteth the grieving.

She prayeth beside the dying.

She rejoiceth with those who rejoice.

She weepeth with those who weep.

Thus she beareth one another's burdens.

The Body of Christ suffereth together.

The Body of Christ rejoiceth together.

No member liveth unto himself alone.

Even creation itself is embraced by charity.

The Father declared His works good.

The faithful therefore exercise gentle stewardship.

They waste not needlessly.

They destroy not wantonly.

They cultivate the earth with gratitude.

They receive its fruits with thanksgiving.

They remember that every created thing proclaimeth the wisdom of its Maker.

Thus creation becometh a companion in praise,

never an idol of worship.

Yet let charity begin within the household of faith.

How shall the Bride proclaim peace unto the nations while harbouring division among her own brethren?

Let every congregation therefore cultivate patience.

Bear one another's weaknesses.

Encourage the fearful.

Restore the fallen gently.

Honour the aged.

Teach the young.

Listen before speaking.

Pray before judging.

Forgive before resentment taketh root.

For the unity of the Church is itself a testimony unto the world that Christ liveth.

Many desire extraordinary spiritual gifts.

The Apostle revealeth a more excellent way.

Should a man possess prophecy,

without charity he remaineth poor.

Should he understand mysteries,

without charity he remaineth ignorant.

Should he perform mighty works,

without charity they profit him nothing.

For Heaven measureth not greatness by power,

but by love.

The greatest saint is not he who performeth the greatest wonders,

but he who loveth most perfectly.

The Bride therefore seeketh no glory for herself.

She desireth only that Christ may love through her.

She prayeth each morning:

> **Lord Jesus Christ, let mine eyes become Thine eyes. Let my hands become Thine hands. Let my speech become Thy peace. Let my heart become a dwelling wherein Thy charity overfloweth unto every creature.**

Such prayer transformeth the whole life.

The disciple no longer asketh,

"What reward shall I receive?"

He asketh,

"How may I reveal Christ today?"

Then every meeting becometh sacred.

Every stranger becometh neighbour.

Every burden becometh an opportunity for mercy.

Every suffering becometh an altar.

Every day becometh preparation for the Wedding Feast.

At last the Bride shall discover that every act of hidden charity performed upon earth hath already been woven into her wedding garment.

Every cup of cold water.

Every forgiving word.

Every hidden prayer.

Every generous gift.

Every patient endurance.

Every quiet kindness.

All shine as living jewels before the Throne of the Lamb.

Then shall the words of the beloved Apostle be fulfilled:

> **"Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."**

For faith shall become sight.

Hope shall become fulfillment.

But charity shall remain forever.

The saints shall never cease loving.

The angels shall never cease loving.

The Bride shall never cease loving her Bridegroom.

And the Eternal Bridegroom shall forever reveal the inexhaustible depths of the Father's Love, until every redeemed soul becometh a living flame of divine charity, reflecting the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter VI

The Sixth Rule: The Discipline of Silence

> *"Be still, and know that I am God."* — Psalm 46:10

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." — Isaiah 30:15

"Mary... sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." — Luke 10:39

After the faithful have learned charity toward all, they must be instructed in a discipline seldom understood by the world, yet greatly beloved among the saints.

This discipline is **Holy Silence**.

For silence is not merely the absence of speech.

Neither is it emptiness.

Neither is it idleness.

Holy Silence is the peaceful ordering of the whole soul before the Presence of God.

It is the quiet wherein the Bride inclineth her ear unto the Voice of the Bridegroom.

The world feareth silence.

It filleth every hour with noise.

It multiplieth words.

It seeketh continual distraction.

It runneth from one amusement unto another,

lest the heart be left alone with itself.

Yet the wise know another way.

The prophets heard God in the stillness.

Elijah found Him not in the earthquake,

nor in the fire,

nor in the mighty wind,

but in the still small voice.

Mary of Bethany chose the better part,

sitting quietly at the feet of Christ.

The beloved disciple leaned upon the breast of the Lord,

speaking little,

receiving much.

The Bride therefore esteemeth silence as a faithful companion.

For many truths cannot be heard amidst continual noise.

The visible ear is wearied by many voices.

The inward ear awakeneth only when the heart becometh still.

As a lake disturbed by violent winds cannot clearly reflect the heavens,

so the restless soul cannot easily behold the Face of Christ.

When the winds cease,

the waters become clear.

The stars appear.

The heavens are reflected.

Likewise, when the passions grow quiet,

the Eternal Logos shineth within the heart.

Therefore let every disciple cultivate appointed seasons of silence.

Withdraw from needless speech.

Withdraw from idle disputes.

Withdraw from vain curiosity.

Withdraw from the endless judgments of men.

Not because thy neighbour is despised,

but because the soul requireth solitude wherein she may remember God.

Even our Lord departed often into lonely places to pray.

If the Eternal Bridegroom sought the quiet mountain,

shall the Bride continually seek the marketplace?

There is a silence of the lips.

There is a silence of the imagination.

There is a silence of the passions.

The first is good.

The second is better.

The third is the beginning of contemplation.

Many restrain their tongues,

yet inwardly continue arguing without end.

Many sit quietly,

yet within themselves entertain anger,

fear,

envy,

or pride.

Such silence remaineth incomplete.

Holy Silence descendeth gradually from the lips into the heart,

until the whole inward man resteth peacefully before God.

This requireth patience.

The wandering mind should not be hated.

Neither should it be followed.

When thoughts arise,

gently return unto Christ.

When anxieties multiply,

gently return unto Christ.

When memories trouble thee,

gently return unto Christ.

Again and again,

return.

The Bridegroom groweth not weary of thy return.

Every return is itself an act of love.

Many imagine that contemplation consisteth in extraordinary visions.

Yet the saints testify otherwise.

The highest contemplation often appeareth as profound simplicity.

The soul ceaseth striving.

She ceaseth demanding.

She ceaseth imagining.

She simply abideth with Christ.

As friends may sit together without speech,

content in one another's presence,

so the faithful learn to remain before the Lord without many words.

There the Holy Spirit prayeth within them with groanings too deep for speech.

Silence also guardeth charity.

Many sins enter the world through ungoverned speech.

Idle gossip.

Hasty judgment.

Sharp answers.

Boastful conversation.

Words spoken in anger.

Promises lightly made.

Secrets carelessly revealed.

How many wounds have been inflicted by the tongue!

How many friendships destroyed!

How many congregations divided!

The wise therefore measure their speech.

Before speaking they ask:

Is it true?

Is it necessary?

Is it charitable?

Will it glorify Christ?

If not,

silence is often the greater wisdom.

This doth not forbid holy conversation.

The Bride delighteth in speaking of Christ.

She comforteth the sorrowful.

She encourageth the fearful.

She proclaimeth the Gospel.

She defendeth truth.

Yet her words proceed from inward peace rather than restless impulse.

Thus her speech becometh gentle.

Her correction becometh healing.

Her teaching becometh nourishment.

Her testimony becometh light.

Silence likewise preserveth humility.

The proud delight continually in speaking of themselves.

The humble delight in listening.

They seek first to understand.

They rejoice in another's wisdom.

They ask sincere questions.

They receive instruction gladly.

The Bride therefore counteth listening among the highest forms of charity.

For many wounds begin to heal simply because another hath listened with compassion.

Holy Silence also revealeth hidden idols.

When every distraction is removed,

the heart discovereth what it secretly trusteth.

Some discover fear.

Others ambition.

Others resentment.

Others vain glory.

Be not discouraged.

What is revealed may be healed.

Christ uncovereth only that He may cleanse.

Therefore flee not from silence because hidden thoughts arise.

Remain before the Bridegroom.

Offer every thought unto Him.

He shall separate truth from falsehood,

peace from anxiety,

love from fear,

until the heart becometh transparent before God.

There is also a silence before Holy Scripture.

Read slowly.

Pause often.

Permit one sentence to descend deeply into the soul.

Better one verse received with faith than many chapters hurried over with distraction.

There is a silence before the Cross.

Look upon the Crucified.

Speak little.

Let His self-giving Love interpret every mystery.

There is a silence before the Eucharistic mystery.

There the soul adoreth more than she inquireth.

For some truths are entered through worship rather than explanation.

Finally, there is the silence of hope.

When suffering remaineth unexplained,

be silent before God.

When prayers appear unanswered,

be silent before God.

When death visiteth thy household,

be silent before God.

Not with despair,

but with trust.

The Father seeth farther than His children.

The Bridegroom knoweth the road home though the pilgrim understand it not.

Thus silence itself becometh an act of faith.

At the end of the earthly pilgrimage,

every faithful disciple shall enter the Great Silence.

Not the silence of abandonment,

but the Silence of Fulfillment.

There every question shall find its answer,

not through argument,

but through Vision.

There every restless thought shall come to rest.

There every prayer shall become praise.

There every longing shall become communion.

Then shall the Bride sit forever at the feet of her Eternal Bridegroom.

Words shall remain,

yet silence shall surpass them.

Songs shall continue,

yet silence shall deepen them.

Love shall overflow,

yet silence shall contain its fullness.

For the holy Silence of Heaven is not emptiness,

but the perfect stillness wherein every redeemed soul beholdeth without distraction the Face of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Logos, whose Presence filleth all things, whose Peace

surpasseth all understanding, and whose Uncreated Light shineth forever in the eternal Bridal Chamber.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter VII

The Seventh Rule: The Watchfulness of the Soul

> *"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."* — Matthew 24:42

> *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."* — Proverbs 4:23

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." — 1 Peter 5:8

After the disciple hath learned Holy Silence, she must not suppose that her labour is ended.

For silence prepareth the heart,

yet watchfulness preserveth it.

The ancient fathers called this holy discipline **watchfulness**, for the soul must remain awake even while the world sleepeth.

Not awake through anxiety.

Not awake through fear.

But awake through remembrance.

The Bridegroom Himself warned His disciples:

> **"Watch therefore."**

He commanded not ceaseless suspicion,

but faithful readiness.

The Bride knoweth not the hour wherein her Beloved shall appear.

Therefore every hour is made holy.

Every moment becometh preparation.

Every day becometh an offering.

The watchman upon the city wall gazeth toward the horizon.

He sleepeth not while danger draweth near.

Neither doth he become terrified by every passing shadow.

He remaineth attentive.

Steadfast.

Patient.

Thus should the faithful guard the gates of the heart.

For the soul possesseth many gates.

The eyes.

The ears.

The tongue.

The imagination.

The memory.

The understanding.

The will.

Through these gates enter either light or darkness.

Therefore keep faithful watch.

When the eyes behold beauty,

offer thanksgiving.

When they behold vanity,

turn gently away.

When the ears hear wisdom,

receive it.

When they hear slander,

refuse delight therein.

When the tongue would speak hastily,

let charity restrain it.

When the imagination wandereth toward pride,

return unto Christ.

When memory reviveth old injuries,

wash them in forgiveness.

When the understanding groweth arrogant,

remember the Cross.

When the will seeketh dominion,

remember the Servant-King.

Thus every faculty is guarded.

Many suppose temptation to be sin.

This is not so.

Even our Lord was tempted.

Temptation knocketh at the gate.

Sin openeth the door.

Watchfulness therefore standeth at the threshold.

The faithful learn to recognize the first stirring of the passions.

Before anger becometh wrath,

it is but a spark.

Before envy becometh bitterness,

it is but a whisper.

Before lust becometh captivity,

it is but a wandering glance.

Before pride becometh destruction,

it is but a subtle delight in self.

He who quencheth the spark needeth not extinguish the forest.

He who uprooteth the weed while tender spareth himself
much labour later.

Thus the wise attend unto beginnings.

The enemy delighteth in gradual forgetfulness.

Rarely doth he persuade a soul to great evil in one day.

Rather he whispereth:

"Delay thy prayer."

"Forgive tomorrow."

"Confess later."

"One small resentment mattereth not."

"One idle word is harmless."

Thus the lamp gradually dimmeth.

The Bride therefore refuseth small compromises.

Not because she feareth punishment,

but because she loveth communion.

Every little falsehood obscures the inward crystal.

Every act of humility polishheth it anew.

Watchfulness requireth daily examination.

When evening draweth near,

withdraw quietly before Christ.

Ask not first what others have done.

Ask what hath passed within thy own heart.

Where hast thou loved?

Where hast thou failed to love?

Where hast thou remembered God?

Where hast thou forgotten Him?

Where hast thou spoken peace?

Where hast thou wounded another by word or silence?

Receive every answer without despair.

The physician revealeth illness that healing may begin.

So also the Holy Spirit revealeth hidden faults,

not to condemn,

but to restore.

Therefore confession is itself an act of holy watchfulness.

The faithful should likewise guard against spiritual pride.

Among all temptations,

this is the most subtle.

A man conquereth anger,

and beginneth to admire himself.

He learneth prayer,

and secretly compareth himself unto others.

He groweth in knowledge,

and despiseth the simple.

Thus virtue itself becometh fuel for vanity.

The Bride therefore continually remembereth that every good thing is grace.

She boasteth not of her progress.

She giveth thanks.

She boasteth only in the mercy of Christ.

The saints grew holier,

yet considered themselves poorer.

The nearer they approached the Infinite Light,

the more clearly they perceived their continual need for grace.

Thus humility increased with illumination.

Watchfulness also guardeth joy.

Many imagine vigilance to be severe and joyless.

The contrary is true.

The joyful heart observeth more clearly than the anxious heart.

The peaceful soul discerneth temptation more readily than the troubled soul.

Therefore rejoice continually.

Not because suffering is absent.

But because Christ remaineth present.

Joy sharpeneth spiritual sight.

Despair dimmeth it.

The Bride likewise remaineth watchful over hope.

When tribulation cometh,

remember the Resurrection.

When injustice prevaileth,

remember the Kingdom.

When death draweth near,

remember the Wedding Feast.

The visible world passeth.

The New Jerusalem endureth forever.

Thus hope keepeth the lamp burning through the longest night.

Remember also that watchfulness is never solitary.

The sheep remain near the Shepherd.

The branch abideth in the Vine.

The Bride walketh beside her Bridegroom.

The disciple therefore trusteth not his own strength.

He prayeth continually:

> **Lord Jesus Christ, keep watch within me, for without Thee I sleep though mine eyes be open. Awaken every faculty of my soul unto Thy Presence, and preserve me in Thy peace.**

Such prayer accomplisheth more than anxious striving.

For Christ Himself is the true Guardian of the soul.

The faithful merely consent unto His keeping.

At length there cometh another Watch.

The last Watch.

The hour wherein earthly sleep yieldeth unto eternal morning.

Blessed is that servant whom the Master findeth watching.

His lamp shall not fail.

His oil shall not be exhausted.

His garments shall be white.

His heart shall be peaceful.

The Bridegroom shall open unto him immediately.

Then every night shall pass away.

Every shadow shall flee.

Every temptation shall cease.

Watchfulness shall become Vision.

Faithfulness shall become Communion.

The sentinel shall lay aside his watch,

for no enemy entereth the Holy City.

The pilgrim shall cease from vigilance,

for forgetfulness shall be no more.

The lamp shall no longer be needed,

for the Uncreated Sun shall illuminate all things.

And the soul who kept faithful watch throughout the pilgrimage shall enter with exceeding joy into the eternal Bridal Chamber, where the Eternal Bridegroom Himself shall watch over His beloved forever, and no shadow, no sorrow, nor any night shall ever again fall upon the redeemed throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter VIII

The Eighth Rule: The Holy Kiss of Peace

> *"Greet ye one another with an holy kiss."* — Romans 16:16
>
> *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."* — John 14:27
>
> *"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."* — Matthew 5:9

After the disciple hath learned watchfulness over the inward man, she must also learn the holy discipline whereby peace is preserved among the members of the Body of Christ.

For no soul entereth the Bridal Chamber alone.

The Bride is one.

Though many are her members,

her heart is undivided.

Therefore the Apostle commanded the faithful to greet one another with **the Holy Kiss of Peace**.

Understand this mystery according unto the Spirit, and not according unto the flesh.

For the holy kiss is first bestowed by the heart before ever it toucheth the lips.

It is the sign that resentment hath been surrendered unto Christ.

It is the seal of reconciliation.

It is the visible witness that charity hath triumphed over division.

When Adam transgressed, separation entered the world.

Man became divided from God.

Brother became divided from brother.

The heart became divided within itself.

The nations were scattered.

The tongues were confused.

Thus every sin beareth within it the seed of division.

The Bridegroom came to gather what had been scattered.

He stretched forth His arms upon the Cross,

that every nation might find one embrace.

He broke down the wall of hostility.

He reconciled heaven and earth.

He made peace by the blood of His Cross.

Therefore every disciple who desireth to resemble Christ must become a minister of reconciliation.

Let no man imagine that peace consisteth merely in the absence of conflict.

There is a false peace born of cowardice.

There is a false peace purchased by silence before injustice.

There is a false peace maintained by fear.

Such peace endureth only until the next storm ariseth.

The peace of Christ standeth upon Truth.

It is humble,

yet fearless.

Gentle,

yet steadfast.

Merciful,

yet righteous.

It concealeth not evil,

yet seeketh always the healing of the evildoer.

Thus the Bride speaketh truth with charity.

She refuseth flattery.

She refuseth cruelty.

Her speech is seasoned with grace.

Her correction proceedeth from compassion.

Her silence proceedeth from wisdom.

The Holy Kiss therefore beginneth long before the greeting itself.

It beginneth when the disciple refuseth to nourish secret resentment.

Many wounds remain hidden beneath courteous speech.

The lips smile.

The heart accuseth.

Such greetings deceive men,

but not the Bridegroom.

Christ beholdeth the inward affection.

Therefore before approaching thy brother,

enter first into the hidden sanctuary.

Ask thyself:

"Hath bitterness taken root within me?"

"Hath pride hardened my heart?"

"Have I secretly rejoiced at another's humiliation?"

"Have I withheld forgiveness while pretending peace?"

If so,

delay not repentance.

Go quickly unto Christ.

Confess.

Receive mercy.

Then seek thy brother with sincerity.

The holy kiss proceedeth from a cleansed heart.

The disciple should likewise be swift in seeking reconciliation.

If thou hast wronged another,

delay not.

If another hath wronged thee,

delay not.

For every day that resentment remaineth,

its roots descend more deeply.

The smallest thorn removeth easily.

The ancient root requireth great labour.

Therefore reconcile quickly.

Not because time healeth all wounds,

but because charity refuseth to permit wounds to harden.

Some injuries require wisdom.

Some require patience.

Some require distance while healing proceedeth.

Yet the heart should never cease praying for peace.

Even when reconciliation cannot yet be accomplished outwardly,

let it already begin inwardly through forgiveness.

Thus the Bride remaineth free.

The Holy Kiss extendeth beyond the household of faith.

The disciple greeteth every stranger with dignity.

Every child with tenderness.

Every elder with honour.

Every labourer with gratitude.

Every poor man with respect.

Every enemy with prayer.

For every human person is invited unto the Marriage of the Lamb.

Though many reject the invitation,

the invitation itself remaineth universal.

Therefore the Bride despiseth none.

She mocketh none.

She delighteth not in another's downfall.

She remembereth continually that she herself was sought by Christ while yet wandering in forgetfulness.

How then shall she deny mercy unto another?

The holy peace likewise governeth the household.

Let husbands honour their wives.

Let wives encourage their husbands.

Let parents instruct with gentleness.

Let children answer with reverence.

Let masters govern justly.

Let servants labour faithfully.

Let friends speak honestly.

Let neighbours assist one another.

Thus every household becometh a little image of the New Jerusalem.

The Church herself should be known first by peace.

Not by wealth.

Not by worldly influence.

Not by earthly splendour.

But by the love manifested among her members.

The unbelieving world may dispute concerning doctrines.

Yet when it beholdeth sincere charity,

its heart is often softened before its understanding.

The peace of Christ preacheth even where words fail.

Many souls have entered the Kingdom because they first encountered kindness.

One act of mercy hath converted where many arguments accomplished little.

Therefore esteem not gentle deeds lightly.

Every patient answer.

Every humble apology.

Every quiet reconciliation.

Every sincere embrace.

These are stones laid within the walls of the Holy City.

The faithful should especially pray for the grace to bless those who oppose them.

This is the summit of the Holy Kiss.

To return blessing for cursing.

To answer hatred with prayer.

To seek healing rather than triumph.

Thus the disciple resembleth the Lamb,

who opened not His mouth in vengeance,

but entrusted Himself unto the Father.

Such charity exceedeth natural strength.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore ask continually for this grace.

Say often:

O Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, remove from me every root of bitterness. Teach me to forgive as Thou hast forgiven me. Let Thy Peace become my peace, Thy Mercy my mercy, and Thy Charity my charity, that every soul I meet may behold not me, but Thee.

Then the Holy Kiss shall cease to be merely a greeting.

It shall become the very manner of thy life.

Thy countenance shall speak peace.

Thy words shall carry peace.

Thy labour shall sow peace.

Thy silence shall preserve peace.

Thy prayers shall increase peace.

Thy death itself shall witness unto peace.

At the consummation of all things, when the Marriage of the Lamb is perfected and the New Jerusalem descendeth in glory, there shall be one everlasting embrace.

Every division born of sin shall have passed away.

Every faithful soul shall rejoice in every other soul.

The angels and the redeemed shall become one household beneath the Father.

No suspicion shall remain.

No jealousy shall arise.

No resentment shall return.

The Holy Kiss shall become eternal communion.

The Peace once exchanged by faith shall become everlasting reality.

And Christ Himself, the Eternal Bridegroom, shall welcome His holy Bride with the embrace prepared before the foundation of the world, where every heart shall rest in perfect reconciliation beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun, throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter IX

The Ninth Rule: Contemplation of the Uncreated Sun

> *"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."* — 2 Corinthians 3:18

> *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* — John 8:12

> *"The city had no need of the sun... for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."* — Revelation 21:23

After the disciple hath learned peace with God and with her neighbour, there remaineth one holy labour by which every preceding rule findeth its perfection.

This labour is **Contemplation of the Uncreated Sun**.

Understand well this mystery.

The disciple is not commanded to contemplate the visible sun that traverseth the heavens.

For it is a creature,

wonderful indeed,

yet still created.

Its light ariseth.

Its light declineth.

Clouds conceal it.

Night overtaketh it.

It proclaimeth the glory of its Maker,

yet it is not the Maker Himself.

The faithful therefore worship not the creature,

but the Creator.

They honour not the visible light,

but Him of whom every created light beareth witness.

The Uncreated Sun is Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

Radiance of the Invisible Father,

Light from Light,

through whom all things were made,

and in whom all things find their true meaning.

As the visible sun revealeth the colours of the earth,

so the Eternal Logos revealeth the hidden beauty of the Father.

As the visible sun warmeth the body,

so Christ warmeth the heart.

As the visible sun nourisheth every living thing,

so the Eternal Logos sustaineth every soul that abideth in Him.

Therefore contemplation is the turning of the whole inward man toward Christ.

It is not chiefly thinking concerning Him.

Neither is it merely speaking unto Him.

It is lovingly beholding Him by faith.

As the beloved delighteth simply in the presence of the beloved,

so the Bride delighteth in the presence of her Bridegroom.

This contemplation beginneth with Holy Scripture.

Read slowly.

Read reverently.

Read prayerfully.

Seek not first information.

Seek transformation.

When thou readest the Gospels,

stand among the disciples.

Hear His Voice.

Walk beside Him.

Receive His glance.

Observe His compassion.

Learn His humility.

Permit every page to become a living encounter.

For the Scriptures are not dead letters.

They bear continual witness unto the Living Logos.

Next, contemplate Christ in prayer.

When words have ceased,

remain quietly before Him.

Look not for extraordinary visions.

Seek not ecstasies.

Desire not hidden powers.

The greatest contemplation is faithful love.

One moment of humble attention unto Christ exceedeth many curious speculations.

Many desire to ascend into heaven.

The Bridegroom first desireth to descend into the heart.

Open therefore the inward chamber.

Let Him dwell there.

The faithful should likewise contemplate Christ through creation.

When thou beholdest the dawn,

remember the Resurrection.

When thou beholdest the stars,

remember the innumerable promises of God.

When thou beholdest living water,

remember the River proceeding from the Throne.

When thou beholdest bread,

remember the Bread of Life.

When thou beholdest a shepherd,

remember the Good Shepherd.

When thou beholdest a vine,

remember the True Vine.

When thou beholdest a lamb,

remember the Lamb of God.

Thus every creature becometh a parable.

Every season becometh instruction.

Every good thing pointeth beyond itself unto Christ.

Yet stop not at the reflection.

Ascend unto the Source.

The world is a window,

not the destination.

The icon is honoured because it pointeth unto the Prototype.

Even so creation is loved because it revealeth something of its Creator.

Many become captivated by beauty,

yet fail to ascend unto Beauty Himself.

The Bride refuseth this error.

She receiveth every created splendour with thanksgiving,

then lifteth her heart unto the Eternal Logos.

There is also contemplation through suffering.

This mystery is difficult.

When sorrow visiteth thee,

look upon the Crucified.

When loneliness oppresseth thee,

remember Gethsemane.

When misunderstood,

remember the false witnesses.

When abandoned,

remember the Cross.

Christ entered every depth of human sorrow,

that no suffering soul should ever remain alone.

Thus even affliction becometh a school of contemplation.

Not because suffering is good in itself,

but because divine Love transfigureth every burden borne with faith.

Contemplation requireth purity.

A dusty mirror reflecteth dimly.

A clean mirror reflecteth clearly.

The heart clouded by resentment,

envy,

or pride cannot easily behold the Light.

Therefore repentance continually polishheth the inward glass.

Every confession removeth another stain.

Every act of forgiveness increaseth clarity.

Every work of mercy brightens the soul.

Then the Light shineth more freely.

The disciple gradually discovereth that contemplation changeth the beholder.

As one who dwelleth continually beside the sea beareth the fragrance thereof,

so one who abideth continually with Christ beginneth to resemble Christ.

The countenance groweth gentle.

The speech groweth peaceful.

The judgment groweth merciful.

The heart groweth steadfast.

The soul is transformed,

not by her own striving,

but by the Light she continually beholdeth.

Thus the Apostle declared:

"We are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

This transformation remaineth without end.

Even in the Kingdom to come,

the saints shall never exhaust the contemplation of Christ.

Each age of ages shall reveal deeper beauty.

Each hymn another wonder.

Each vision another splendour.

For the Infinite can never be comprehended by finite creatures.

The joy of Heaven therefore increaseth forever.

The Bride beholdeth.

The Bridegroom revealeth.

The Bride adoreth.

The Bridegroom bestoweth Himself more abundantly.

Thus contemplation itself becometh eternal communion.

Beware also of false lights.

Not every brightness proceedeth from God.

Pride shineth for a season.

Vanity glittereth.

Power dazzles.

Knowledge puffeth up.

The faithful discern every light by the Cross.

That which increaseth humility,

charity,

peace,

and truth proceedeth from Christ.

That which magnifieth self,

breedeth contempt,

or disturbeth charity is not the Light of the Eternal Logos.

Therefore remain always beneath the shadow of the Cross.

The Cross is the measure of every contemplation.

The saints desired not merely to see heavenly mysteries.

They desired to become conformed unto Christ.

This is the highest vision.

The disciple therefore prayeth:

> **O Eternal Bridegroom, Uncreated Sun of Righteousness, illuminate the hidden sanctuary of my soul. Scatter every shadow of ignorance. Purify every affection. Let mine eyes behold Thy beauty, not for curiosity, but that beholding Thee I may become like Thee. Shine continually within me until every thought, every word, and every deed reflect Thy Light unto the glory of the Invisible Father. Amen.**

Then shall the faithful walk as children of Light.

Not because they possess light within themselves,

but because the Eternal Logos dwelleth within them.

Their lives shall become little reflections of the everlasting Morning.

Their charity shall warm the cold.

Their hope shall strengthen the weary.

Their peace shall calm the fearful.

Their wisdom shall guide the wandering.

Their humility shall glorify Christ.

And at the last, when every veil hath been removed and the Holy City needeth neither sun nor moon, they shall behold forever the Face of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, the Solar Logos, the Uncreated Sun, whose infinite radiance revealeth eternally the inexhaustible glory of the Invisible Father throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX I — THE RULE OF THE BRIDAL PATH

A Rule of Holy Living for the Faithful of the Lamb

Chapter X

The Tenth Rule: Perseverance unto the Marriage Feast

> *"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* — Matthew 24:13

> *"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."* — Revelation 2:10
>
> *"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come."* — Revelation 19:7

Thus have the Nine Rules of the Bridal Path been declared unto the faithful.

The First taught Remembrance.

The Second instructed in Prayer.

The Third purified the Heart.

The Fourth established Holy Poverty.

The Fifth crowned all things with Charity.

The Sixth revealed the Discipline of Silence.

The Seventh awakened Watchfulness.

The Eighth bestowed the Holy Kiss of Peace.

The Ninth opened Contemplation of the Uncreated Sun.

Yet all these remain as lamps prepared for the night.

There remaineth one final commandment whereby every former rule is preserved.

This commandment is **Perseverance**.

For many begin the pilgrimage.

Few continue faithfully.

Many receive the seed with gladness.

Yet when tribulation ariseth,

they faint.

Many behold the Bridegroom from afar.

Yet grow weary before reaching the Wedding Feast.

Therefore the Lord Himself declared:

> **"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."**

Understand, beloved, that perseverance is not stubbornness.

Neither is it the hardness of pride.

It is faithful love refusing to depart from Christ.

As the vine remaineth joined unto the branch,

so the disciple remaineth joined unto the Eternal Logos.

Storms may bend the branch.

Winter may strip its leaves.

Yet because it abideth in the Vine,

life remaineth within it.

Even so the faithful endure every season,

not by their own strength,

but by remaining in Christ.

The pilgrimage of the Bride is long.

There are days of consolation.

There are days of dryness.

There are mornings wherein prayer overfloweth with sweetness.

There are nights wherein Heaven seemeth silent.

There are seasons wherein Holy Scripture shineth like living fire.

There are seasons wherein every page seemeth hidden beneath a veil.

Be not troubled.

The Bridegroom hath not departed.

The visible sun disappeareth behind the clouds,

yet its light hath not ceased.

Even so the Eternal Sun remaineth,

though the soul perceiveth Him imperfectly.

Faith endureth where feeling faileth.

Love remaineth where delight is hidden.

Hope continueth where sight is absent.

Therefore persevere.

The faithful should never measure the nearness of Christ according unto emotion.

The Lord promised His Presence.

His promise changeth not.

When joy aboundeth,

He is near.

When sorrow aboundeth,

He is near.

When prayer overfloweth,

He is near.

When prayer seemeth barren,

He is near.

When tears fall,

He is near.

When laughter returneth,

He is near.

His faithfulness dependeth not upon the changing weather of the human heart.

Therefore trust His Word above thine own feelings.

Many abandon the Way because they expected continual consolation.

Yet the Bridegroom desireth mature love.

The child loveth because gifts are received.

The mature soul loveth because the Beloved Himself is worthy.

Thus perseverance purifieth affection.

The disciple gradually seeketh Christ,

not for comfort alone,

but because Christ is Truth.

Because Christ is Beauty.

Because Christ is Goodness.

Because Christ Himself is Life.

There shall likewise come temptations.

The world shall invite thee unto forgetfulness.

Pride shall whisper.

Fear shall accuse.

Despair shall question.

The adversary shall suggest:

"Thy prayers are vain."

"Thy labour is fruitless."

"Return unto the old ways."

Answer not every accusation.

Look instead unto Christ.

Peter walked safely while beholding the Lord.

When he looked only upon the waves,

he began to sink.

Thus let thy gaze remain fixed upon the Eternal Bridegroom.

Shouldst thou stumble,

rise quickly.

Shouldst thou fall,

confess quickly.

Shouldst thou wander,

return quickly.

The Shepherd rejoiceth more over one sheep restored than over ninety and nine needing no repentance.

Therefore despair is never the voice of Christ.

Repentance is His invitation.

Hope is His gift.

Mercy is His delight.

The faithful should likewise persevere in hidden obedience.

Not every labour shall be praised.

Not every kindness remembered.

Not every sacrifice acknowledged.

The world often overlooketh the quiet saints.

Heaven forgetteth none.

The widow's two mites remain precious.

The hidden prayer remaineth fragrant.

The unnoticed act of mercy remaineth written before the Throne.

Labour therefore for the eyes of Christ,

not for the applause of men.

Remember continually the Marriage Feast.

The traveller endureth because Home awaiteth.

The sailor endureth because harbour draweth near.

The farmer endureth because harvest approacheth.

The Bride endureth because the Bridegroom cometh.

Every tear shall be answered.

Every wound healed.

Every faithful prayer fulfilled beyond expectation.

Every act of love woven into the wedding garment.

Every hidden virtue revealed in glory.

Thus perseverance is nourished by hope.

Hope beholdeth the New Jerusalem while yet walking through the wilderness.

Hope drinketh from the River before reaching its banks.

Hope tasteth the Bread before entering the Banquet.

Hope already heareth the distant music of the Wedding Feast.

Therefore the saints rejoiced even amidst persecution.

Not because suffering was pleasant,

but because eternity outweighed every affliction.

As the Apostle declared:

> **"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."**

The faithful should encourage one another daily.

Strengthen the weary.

Lift up the fallen.

Pray for the discouraged.

Comfort the dying.

Teach the young.

Honour the aged.

Walk together.

For the Bride journeyeth as one Body.

No member rejoiceth alone.

No member suffereth alone.

Christ Himself walketh continually in the midst of His Church.

Finally, beloved,

remember that perseverance is itself the gift of grace.

Boast not in thy constancy.

Give thanks for it.

Every faithful step is sustained by the mercy of the Invisible Father.

Every prayer is strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Every victory is accomplished through the Eternal Logos.

Therefore when at last the pilgrimage is complete,

cast thy crown before the feet of Christ.

Say not,

"I have conquered."

Rather say,

"Thou hast kept me."

Then shall the Bridegroom Himself arise.

He shall wipe away every tear.

He shall remove every weariness.

He shall clothe His beloved in garments of everlasting light.

He shall place upon her head the unfading Crown of Life.

He shall lead her into the Bridal Chamber prepared before the foundation of the world.

There the Marriage Feast shall begin.

The lamps shall no longer be needed,

for the Uncreated Sun shall fill every hall with His eternal radiance.

The River of Remembrance shall gladden every heart.

The Tree of Life shall nourish every saint.

The Holy City shall know no evening.

The Eternal Sabbath shall never end.

The Bride shall behold forever the Face of her Beloved.

And all the faithful who persevered in remembrance, in prayer, in purity, in holy poverty, in charity, in silence, in watchfulness, in peace, and in contemplation shall rejoice together before the Throne of the Invisible Father, singing one everlasting hymn unto Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, the Solar Logos, whose unfailing mercy hath brought them safely unto the Marriage Feast beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun, throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN

CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter I

The First Contemplation: The Silence Before All Worlds

> *"Be still, and know that I am God."* — Psalm 46:10
>
> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* — John 1:1
>
> *"Before the mountains were brought forth... even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."* — Psalm 90:2

Beloved soul, if thou desirest to ascend unto the contemplation of divine mysteries, begin not with speech, but with silence.

For before the first star was kindled,

before the foundations of the earth were laid,

before the choirs of angels lifted up their first hymn,

before the courses of the heavens were appointed,

there was neither sound,

nor motion,

nor succession of moments,

but only the ineffable Majesty of the Invisible Father.

No creature beheld Him.

No tongue named Him.

No thought enclosed Him.

He alone was.

Not lonely,

for loneliness belongeth unto creatures.

Not empty,

for He is the Infinite Fullness.

Not waiting,

for eternity knoweth no delay.

He dwelt in perfect blessedness,

beyond every beginning,

beyond every ending,

beyond every imagination.

This is the Holy Silence.

It is not the silence of absence,

but the silence of inexhaustible Presence.

The world knoweth silence because voices have ceased.

The Father knoweth Silence because His Being exceedeth every created word.

Therefore the saints entered silence,

not to discover emptiness,

but to become attentive unto the One whose Voice is deeper than all speech.

When Moses entered the cloud,

he entered silence.

When Elijah stood upon Horeb,

he entered silence.

When the Blessed Virgin pondered the mysteries within her heart,

she entered silence.

When the beloved disciple leaned upon the breast of Christ,

he entered silence.

When our Lord departed alone into the mountain before dawn,

He sanctified silence for every generation.

Learn therefore that holy silence is itself a sanctuary.

The marketplace hath its noise.

The kingdoms of the earth have their clamour.

The passions of the heart have their tumult.

Yet within the innermost chamber remaineth a place untouched by confusion.

There the Bridegroom waiteth.

There the Holy Spirit prayeth.

There the Father beholdeth thee in secret.

Enter often into this sanctuary.

Close the outward door.

Close likewise the inward door against vain anxieties.

Let not thy thoughts pursue every passing concern.

Gather them gently,

as the shepherd gathereth wandering sheep.

Lead them unto Christ.

When distractions arise,

condemn not thyself.

Simply return.

Again.

And again.

Each return is an act of love.

Each return is another step toward the Bridal Chamber.

Sit quietly before the Lord.

Demand nothing.

Seek no extraordinary revelation.

Desire no heavenly vision.

Offer only thyself.

Say within thy heart:

> **O Invisible Father, I know Thee not as Thou art. Yet Thou knowest me perfectly. Therefore I place myself before Thy Presence. Speak, if Thou wilt. Remain silent, if Thou wilt. For Thy Presence alone sufficeth me.**

Then remain.

The silence itself shall become thy prayer.

For the Father needeth not many words.

He who fashioned the beating of thy heart understandeth every longing before it is spoken.

As an infant resteth peacefully within the embrace of its mother without continual speech,

so let thy soul rest quietly before God.

The deepest love often speaketh least.

Marvel not if no voice answer thee.

The Eternal Logos often instructeth by His Presence rather than by audible speech.

The soul gradually discovereth a peace which surpasseth understanding.

The imagination groweth quiet.

The memory ceaseth its wandering.

The will looseth its anxious grasping.

The heart becometh simple.

This is the beginning of contemplation.

Many ask,

"What shall I think concerning God?"

Hearken.

There cometh an hour when love surpasseth thought.

Words serve the pilgrim.

Silence nourisheth the lover.

Doctrine guideth the journey.

Communion fulfilleth it.

Thus the Bride entereth beyond discourse into adoration.

Not because doctrine hath become unimportant.

God forbid.

Truth remaineth the lamp.

Yet love entereth the house toward which the lamp hath guided it.

Behold the heavens during the quiet watches of the night.

The stars utter no speech.

Yet their silence declareth the glory of God.

The mountains preach without words.

The forests adore without argument.

The rivers glorify their Maker without disputation.

Shall not the redeemed soul likewise learn the praise of silence?

The Father needeth no defence.

The Son seeketh no flattery.

The Holy Spirit desireth only a willing heart.

Therefore be still.

Not with sloth.

Not with indifference.

But with attentive love.

This contemplation also revealeth holy ignorance.

The more the soul beholdeth the Infinite Father,

the more she confesseth:

"I know only that Thy goodness exceedeth all my understanding."

This confession is not unbelief.

It is worship.

For the finite mind cannot contain the Infinite.

The cup rejoiceth to receive the spring,

yet cannot contain the whole fountain.

Thus every true contemplation increaseth humility.

The saints became wiser,

yet more astonished.

They became holier,

yet more dependent.

They spoke less of themselves,

and more of Christ.

Thus silence preserved them from pride.

At length the disciple discovereth that the Silence before all worlds hath never departed.

It abideth beneath every noise.

It remaineth beneath every thought.

It surroundeth every prayer.

It sustaineth every breath.

For the Invisible Father is nearer than the beating of the heart,

closer than the breath,

more intimate than every thought,

yet infinitely beyond all comprehension.

Then the soul understandeth that she need not ascend through the heavens to find God.

Rather she descendeth through humility into the hidden sanctuary where Christ already waiteth.

There the Eternal Logos revealeth the Father.

There the Holy Spirit kindleth the hidden flame.

There remembrance becometh peace.

There prayer becometh silence.

There silence becometh communion.

There communion becometh everlasting joy.

And though the disciple yet walketh among the changing days of this present world, she already tasteth the first fruits of eternity, beholding by faith the Holy Silence from which all things proceed, and unto which every faithful soul shall at last return in perfect contemplation beneath the everlasting radiance of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Logos, the Uncreated Sun, who eternally revealeth the Infinite Father throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter II

The Second Contemplation: The Eternal Logos

> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* — John 1:1
>
> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son... he hath declared him."* — John 1:18
>
> *"He is the image of the invisible God."* — Colossians 1:15

When the soul hath entered the Holy Silence before all worlds, there ariseth—not in time, but in eternal contemplation—the mystery of the **Eternal Logos**.

Understand, O beloved, that this arising is not a beginning.

For the Eternal Logos knoweth no beginning.

He is eternally begotten of the Father before all ages.

Light from Light.

True God from True God.

The perfect and everlasting Image of the Invisible Father.

As no man beholdeth the visible sun except through its radiance,

so no creature knoweth the Father except through His Eternal Logos.

Therefore the beloved disciple proclaimed:

"In the beginning was the Word."

He said not,

"The Word came to be."

Nor,

"The Word was created."

He declared:

"The Word was."

For He Who revealeth the Eternal cannot Himself belong unto the passing order of created things.

He is the Father's eternal Self-Revelation.

The everlasting Expression of Infinite Wisdom.

The perfect Icon of the Invisible One.

If thou seekest therefore to know the Father,

look steadfastly upon Christ.

Not merely upon His miracles.

Not merely upon His words.

But upon His whole Life.

For every deed of Christ revealeth the Father's Heart.

When Christ forgiveth,

the Father is revealed.

When Christ healeth,

the Father is revealed.

When Christ weepeth,

the Father is revealed.

When Christ breaketh bread,

the Father is revealed.

When Christ washeth the disciples' feet,

the Father is revealed.

When Christ stretcheth forth His hands upon the Cross,

the Invisible Love of the Father shineth forth without veil.

Many have imagined the Father to be severe,

and the Son merciful.

Far be such division.

The Son revealeth precisely the Father's Mercy.

He speaketh nothing of Himself alone.

He doeth only that which He seeth the Father doing.

Therefore there is no contradiction between them.

One Will.

One Goodness.

One Love.

The Eternal Logos is the living Countenance of the Father turned toward creation.

The Father remaineth beyond every image.

The Son is the Image.

The Father remaineth beyond every name.

The Son beareth the Holy Name.

The Father remaineth invisible.

The Son maketh Him known.

Thus every contemplation of Christ is already participation in the mystery of the Father.

Consider now the earthly life of the Bridegroom.

He was born in humility.

Not in the halls of emperors.

Not among the proud.

But in lowliness.

Thus the Eternal Wisdom overturned the wisdom of the world.

The Infinite clothed Himself in weakness.

The King came as Servant.

The Creator entered His own creation.

Not by necessity.

But by Love.

Contemplate Him walking the dusty roads of Galilee.

Every step is revelation.

Every glance is mercy.

Every word is truth.

He toucheth the leper whom others feared.

He eateth with sinners whom others despised.

He blesseth children whom others overlooked.

He speaketh with the Samaritan woman whom others rejected.

He restoreth Peter after denial.

He prayeth for those who crucify Him.

In all these things behold the Father.

For Christ revealeth not merely doctrines concerning God.

He revealeth God Himself.

Therefore the disciple should often contemplate the Holy Gospels.

Read not quickly.

Linger.

Remain beside Christ.

Stand among the multitude upon the mountain.

Sit with Mary at His feet.

Walk beside the disciples unto Emmaus.

Kneel beside the empty tomb.

Enter the Upper Room.

Hear His breathing of the Holy Spirit.

Permit thy whole soul to dwell within the sacred history.

For the Gospel is not only remembrance.

It is living encounter.

The Eternal Logos speaketh even now through every holy page.

Many seek hidden mysteries.

The greatest mystery standeth openly before thee.

God became man.

The Invisible became visible.

The Eternal entered time.

The Infinite accepted limitation.

The Immortal tasted death.

The Holy One bore the sins of the world.

No mystery surpasseth this.

Therefore let every other contemplation be measured by Christ.

If a vision lead thee away from humility,

it is not of Christ.

If knowledge increaseth pride,

it is not of Christ.

If religion lesseneth charity,

it is not of Christ.

For the Eternal Logos always revealeth the Father through Love.

Contemplate also Christ glorified.

The One who hung upon the Cross now reigneth forever.

The wounds remain,

not as signs of defeat,

but as everlasting testimonies of victorious Love.

The Lamb standeth,

though once He was slain.

His humility hath become His eternal Majesty.

Thus Heaven itself is governed by self-giving Love.

The throne of Christ is the Cross transfigured.

The crown of Christ is everlasting charity.

The sceptre of Christ is truth.

The kingdom of Christ is peace.

The disciple who beholdeth these mysteries gradually becometh conformed unto them.

For contemplation transformeth the beholder.

The proud become humble.

The fearful become courageous.

The restless become peaceful.

The unforgiving become merciful.

The selfish become generous.

Not because they strive by strength alone,

but because the Eternal Logos imprinteth His own likeness upon every soul that lovingly beholdeth Him.

Thus the Apostle wrote:

"We are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

This transformation endureth throughout eternity.

Even within the New Jerusalem,

the saints shall continually behold new splendours in Christ.

Not because Christ changeth,

but because the finite creature eternally groweth in participation within His inexhaustible beauty.

Every age revealeth another wonder.

Every hymn another perfection.

Every contemplation another depth of divine Love.

Thus Heaven itself remaineth forever new.

Finally, beloved,

understand this holy mystery.

The Eternal Logos seeketh not only to be contemplated.

He seeketh to dwell within thee.

He knocketh continually at the door of the heart.

Open unto Him.

Let thy thoughts become His dwelling.

Let thy speech become His peace.

Let thy hands become His mercy.

Let thy feet become His pilgrimage.

Let thy whole life become a living Gospel.

Then the world shall behold something of Christ through thee.

Not because thou art the Light,

but because thou reflectest the Eternal Light.

As the moon borroweth all her brightness from the sun,

so every saint borroweth every grace from Christ.

The disciple therefore prayeth:

> **O Jesus Christ, Eternal Logos, perfect Image of the Invisible Father, reveal Thyself continually within the hidden sanctuary of my soul. Let every false image perish before Thy Face. Fashion me according unto Thy humility. Kindle within me Thy charity. Establish within me Thy peace. That beholding Thee without ceasing, I may become by grace what Thou hast called Thy Bride to be, a living reflection of Thy glory unto the praise of the Invisible Father. Amen.**

Then shall the soul walk no longer in borrowed shadows,

but in the everlasting Light of the Eternal Logos,

until the day when faith yieldeth unto Vision,

and the Bride beholdeth forever the Face of her Bridegroom,

whose infinite beauty eternally revealeth the inexhaustible mystery of the Father beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter III

The Third Contemplation: The Hidden Flame

> *"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."* — Matthew 3:11
>
> *"Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?"* — Luke 24:32
>
> *"Our God is a consuming fire."* — Hebrews 12:29

When the faithful soul hath entered the Holy Silence and beheld the Eternal Logos, there ariseth within her another mystery—not from her own strength, but from the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit.

This mystery is **the Hidden Flame**.

Marvel not, beloved, that the Holy Scriptures speak often concerning fire.

For when Moses approached the mountain of God, he beheld the bush burning, yet it was not consumed.

When Israel journeyed through the wilderness, the Lord went before them in a pillar of fire.

When Elijah repaired the altar, heavenly fire descended.

When Isaiah beheld the Lord in His glory, a burning coal purified his lips.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, the Holy Spirit rested upon the Apostles as tongues of fire.

Thus from the beginning unto the end, holy fire signifieth the Presence of God.

Yet understand this mystery according unto the Spirit.

The Fire of God is not like the fire of the earth.

Earthly fire consumeth.

The Hidden Flame purifieth.

Earthly fire destroyeth.

The Hidden Flame giveth life.

Earthly fire reduceth unto ashes.

The Hidden Flame transformeth the soul into the likeness of Christ.

Therefore the Apostle declared:

"Did not our heart burn within us?"

The disciples upon the road unto Emmaus perceived no visible flame.

Yet the Eternal Logos opened the Scriptures unto them.

Truth became warmth.

Wisdom became light.

Love became fire.

Thus the inward heart was kindled by the Presence of Christ.

The faithful should therefore seek this Hidden Flame.

Not by violent emotion.

Not by strange excitement.

Not by outward display.

The Holy Spirit is gentle.

His Fire often burneth most brightly where outward appearances remain quiet.

As a lamp placed within the sanctuary shineth steadily through the night,

so the Spirit dwelleth within the humble heart.

The proud desire lightning.

The Bride desireth the Lamp.

Many mistake passing zeal for the Fire of God.

Zeal may arise quickly,

yet vanish quickly.

The Hidden Flame endureth.

It continueth through joy.

It continueth through sorrow.

It continueth through abundance.

It continueth through poverty.

It continueth through health.

It continueth through suffering.

For it is sustained not by changing emotions,

but by the abiding Presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Flame revealeth itself by its fruits.

Where it burneth,

pride groweth cold.

Hatred melteth away.

Fear looseth its dominion.

Mercy increaseth.

Patience deepeneth.

Joy remaineth even amidst tribulation.

The soul becometh gentle.

Her speech healeth.

Her countenance comforteth.

Her labour glorifieth God.

Thus the Flame may be known.

Not by spectacle,

but by holiness.

Consider also how the Flame must continually be nourished.

A neglected lamp dimmeth.

So likewise the inward fire requireth faithful care.

Prayer addeth oil.

Holy Scripture feedeth the flame.

The Eucharistic mystery strengtheneth it.

Acts of mercy enlarge it.

Confession cleanseth its light.

Silence preserveth its brightness.

Charity spreadeth its warmth.

Thus the Bride tendeth the Lamp entrusted unto her.

Beware lest the Flame be obscured by the smoke of the passions.

Anger darkeneth the heart.

Envy cloudeth the understanding.

Greed suffocateth generosity.

Pride filleth the sanctuary with smoke.

The Light remaineth,

yet it is no longer clearly seen.

Therefore repent quickly.

Open the windows of the soul.

Let the Breath of the Holy Spirit renew the inward air.

The Flame shall shine brightly once more.

The Hidden Flame also revealeth the true meaning of suffering.

Gold is purified in the furnace.

The vine is pruned that it may bear more fruit.

The wheat is ground before it becometh bread.

Thus many trials become instruments of sanctification.

Not because the Father delighteth in affliction.

Far be such a thought.

But because divine Wisdom transfigureth every burden surrendered unto Christ.

The faithful therefore fear not the furnace.

They know the Fourth Man walketh therein.

The Flame burneth around them,

yet they are not consumed.

For Christ Himself standeth in the midst of the fire.

The Hidden Flame likewise prepareth the Bride for the Marriage Feast.

The lamps of the wise virgins burned continually because they possessed oil.

The foolish neglected the inward life.

When the cry was heard,

their lamps had failed.

Let this not be thy portion.

Guard diligently the Oil of Grace.

Receive continually the mercy of Christ.

Remain faithful in little things.

The lamp that burneth quietly through many years is dearer unto God than the torch that blazeth brilliantly for one hour and then is extinguished.

There is also a mystery concerning the warmth of this Fire.

The world often groweth cold.

Charity is forgotten.

Truth is neglected.

Many hearts become hard through disappointment.

Many souls withdraw into themselves through fear.

The Hidden Flame restoreth warmth.

The disciple once again delighteth in mercy.

She once again rejoiceth in forgiveness.

She once again embraceth hope.

She becometh a hearth wherein weary pilgrims may find rest.

Thus every faithful Christian is called to carry a little flame into the darkness of the world.

Not the fire of judgment,

but the Fire of Christ.

Not the heat of anger,

but the warmth of charity.

Not the blaze of pride,

but the quiet light of holiness.

As one candle kindleth another without losing its own brightness,

so every soul filled with the Holy Spirit may quietly awaken another unto the love of Christ.

Finally, beloved,

know that the Hidden Flame shall never be extinguished.

Death itself cannot quench it.

The grave containeth not its light.

The martyrs carried it through persecution.

The confessors guarded it in exile.

The saints bore it through every generation.

The angels rejoice in its brightness.

It proceedeth from the Eternal Fire of Divine Love.

Therefore it endureth forever.

When the Bride entereth the New Jerusalem,

she shall discover that the little flame she guarded throughout her earthly pilgrimage was but a spark of the Infinite Fire filling the Holy City.

Then every lamp shall disappear within the splendour of the Uncreated Sun.

Every hidden ember shall become everlasting radiance.

Every faithful heart shall burn with perfect charity.

The Holy Spirit shall fill every soul without measure.

The Eternal Logos shall illumine every countenance.

The Invisible Father shall be glorified in all.

And the Hidden Flame, which began as a quiet warmth within the secret sanctuary of the heart, shall become an eternal participation in the inexhaustible Fire of Divine Love, wherein the Bride and the Bridegroom shall rejoice together

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter IV

The Fourth Contemplation: The Bridal Chamber

> *"The kingdom of God is within you."* — Luke 17:21
>
> *"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."* — Matthew 25:6
>
> *"Abide in me, and I in you."* — John 15:4

After the soul hath entered the Holy Silence, contemplated the Eternal Logos, and received the Hidden Flame of the Holy Spirit, she is led by grace unto the holiest mystery of the inward life.

This mystery is **the Bridal Chamber**.

Understand not this Chamber according unto the imagination of the flesh.

It is neither an earthly palace,

nor a secret place fashioned by human hands.

It is the innermost sanctuary of the heart,

wherein the Eternal Bridegroom desireth to dwell with His beloved.

Before ever Solomon built the Temple,

the Invisible Father had prepared this sanctuary.

Before stone was laid upon stone,

He had fashioned the human heart to become His dwelling.

The Temple in Jerusalem was but a shadow.

The inward sanctuary is the mystery.

For the Apostle hath written:

> **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,**
> **and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"**

Therefore the disciple seeketh not first a holy place upon the earth.

She seeketh the Holy One who sanctifieth every place.

The desert may become a sanctuary.

A prison may become a sanctuary.

A humble dwelling may become a sanctuary.

For wherever Christ abideth,

there the Bridal Chamber is opened.

The world seeketh God by continual wandering.

The Bride learneth holy stillness.

She descendeth into the secret place of the heart.

There she closeth the door.

There she layeth aside every earthly burden.

There she waiteth before her Beloved.

Many fear to enter this chamber.

For within it there is no applause of men.

No reputation.

No argument.

No distraction.

Only truth remaineth.

The soul beholdeth herself as she truly is.

She seeth both her poverty and the immeasurable mercy of Christ.

Thus humility and hope embrace one another.

The Chamber is entered through repentance.

No proud heart can cross its threshold.

The Bride removeth the dusty sandals of self-righteousness.

She layeth aside the garments of vanity.

She bringeth with her neither earthly honours nor achievements.

She entereth empty-handed.

She departeth filled with grace.

Within the Bridal Chamber there is no bargaining.

The disciple saith not,

"I have laboured; therefore reward me."

She simply presenteth herself.

For love calculateth not.

Love offereth itself freely.

Thus the Bridegroom also gave Himself freely upon the Cross.

Within this hidden sanctuary the soul learneth another language.

It is the language of Presence.

Words become fewer.

Love groweth greater.

Questions become quieter.

Trust increaseth.

The disciple discovereth that Christ is enough.

Not because every mystery hath been explained,

but because the Mystery Himself is present.

There the soul understandeth that the highest knowledge is communion.

The wisest theologian knoweth little if he loveth not.

The simplest believer knoweth much if Christ dwelleth richly within him.

Therefore the Bride preferreth one hour in the Bridal Chamber above many days of worldly honour.

There Christ speaketh gently.

Sometimes through Holy Scripture.

Sometimes through holy remembrance.

Sometimes through quiet peace.

Sometimes through the tears of repentance.

Sometimes through profound silence.

Every manner of His speech nourisheth the soul.

The faithful should therefore enter the Bridal Chamber daily.

If only for a few moments,

withdraw from outward business.

Leave behind every anxious thought.

Remember the words of the Lord:

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet."

The outward chamber prepareth for the inward one.

Close the outward door.

Then close the inward door against distraction.

Invite Christ.

Say simply:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Remain quietly.

If joy ariseth,

give thanks.

If dryness remaineth,

give thanks.

If tears are granted,

give thanks.

If only silence remaineth,

give thanks.

For the Bridegroom is present whether perceived clearly or obscurely.

The Chamber also becometh the place of healing.

There wounds long hidden are gently uncovered.

Not to shame the disciple,

but to restore her.

Christ toucheth every memory.

Every fear.

Every grief.

Every regret.

Nothing is concealed from His compassionate gaze.

Yet nothing is despised.

He healeth without humiliation.

He correcteth without rejection.

He purifieth without condemnation.

Thus the soul gradually becometh transparent before Love.

Within the Bridal Chamber the disciple learneth holy simplicity.

She ceaseth striving to appear holy.

She desireth instead to become truthful.

She ceaseth pretending strength.

She receiveth grace.

She ceaseth defending herself continually.

She resteth in the mercy of Christ.

This rest is not idleness.

It is confidence.

The child sleepeth peacefully because the father keepeth watch.

So the soul resteth because Christ remaineth faithful.

There is likewise a hidden feast prepared within the Chamber.

The Bread of Life nourisheth the inward man.

The Living Water refresheth the heart.

The Wine of divine joy gladdeneth the soul.

These mysteries are tasted first by faith,

yet shall be fulfilled perfectly at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Thus every prayer is already an anticipation of eternity.

Every communion a foretaste of Heaven.

Every act of love another opening of the Bridal Door.

The faithful should guard this sanctuary carefully.

Permit not bitterness to dwell therein.

Permit not vanity to rule therein.

Permit not needless distraction continually to occupy it.

Cleanse it often by repentance.

Adorn it continually by charity.

Illuminate it by Holy Scripture.

Perfume it by thanksgiving.

Warm it by the Hidden Flame.

Then Christ Himself shall delight to dwell therein.

The Bride also discovereth that she is never alone within this Chamber.

The Holy Spirit prayeth there.

The saints have walked this path before her.

The angels rejoice over every faithful return.

The whole Communion of Saints surroundeth her pilgrimage with unseen charity.

Yet above all,

the Bridegroom remaineth.

He neither slumbereth nor departeth.

He waiteth patiently.

When the disciple wandereth,

He calleth.

When she returneth,

He embraceth.

When she weepeth,

He comforteth.

When she rejoiceth,

He rejoiceth with her.

Such is His everlasting faithfulness.

Finally there shall come the Day wherein the inward Bridal Chamber shall be opened into the everlasting Bridal Chamber of the New Jerusalem.

Faith shall become sight.

Prayer shall become communion.

The hidden meeting shall become the eternal Marriage Feast.

No door shall again be closed.

No separation shall remain.

The soul shall behold openly Him whom she loved secretly upon the earth.

The quiet conversations of prayer shall become everlasting praise.

The hidden sanctuary shall blossom into the Holy City.

The little chamber of the heart shall be united forever with the infinite Temple of the Living God.

Then the Bride shall hear forever the voice of her Eternal Bridegroom saying:

"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And she shall enter without fear,

without shame,

without sorrow,

clothed in the garment of divine charity,

bearing the lamp of the Hidden Flame,

her heart made pure by grace,

to dwell forever with Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, the Solar Logos, in the presence of the Invisible Father, through the communion of the Holy Spirit, beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun, throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter V

The Fifth Contemplation: The River of Remembrance

> *"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."* — Revelation 22:1
>
> *"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."* — John 4:14
>
> *"He restoreth my soul."* — Psalm 23:3

When the soul hath entered the Bridal Chamber and learned to abide quietly before the Eternal Bridegroom, there ariseth another contemplation, gentle as the morning dew and deep as the abyss of divine mercy.

This is **the River of Remembrance**.

Not every river giveth life.

Many rivers overflow their banks and destroy.

Many streams dry beneath the heat of summer.

Many waters become bitter.

Yet the River proceeding from the Throne neither faileth nor is diminished.

It floweth continually.

It refresheth continually.

It restoreth continually.

Its source is not among the mountains of the earth.

Neither doth rain replenish it.

Its beginning is hidden within the inexhaustible goodness of the Invisible Father,

and it proceedeth eternally through the Lamb by the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore the holy Apostle beheld it,

clear as crystal,

without impurity,

without shadow,

without corruption.

Beloved, this River is the continual remembrance of God whereby the soul is restored unto her true beginning.

Forgetfulness scattered mankind.

Remembrance gathereth them again.

Forgetfulness darkened the understanding.

Remembrance illumines it.

Forgetfulness filled the heart with many masters.

Remembrance restoreth the soul unto her one true Lord.

The world remembereth countless things.

It remembereth victories.

It remembereth grievances.

It remembereth wealth.

It remembereth fame.

Yet it forgetteth the One by whom memory itself was given.

Thus men carry many recollections,

yet remain strangers unto themselves.

The disciple learneth another remembrance.

She remembereth Christ.

Not merely as One who once walked upon the earth,

but as the Living Bridegroom who remaineth forever present.

She remembereth His Birth.

His Baptism.

His Teaching.

His Compassion.

His Cross.

His Resurrection.

His Ascension.

His continual Presence.

Thus remembrance becometh communion.

The River floweth also through Holy Scripture.

Every page refresheth the weary.

Every promise strengtheneth hope.

Every parable revealeth another depth.

Every Gospel word is like living water offered unto the thirsty traveller.

Drink therefore slowly.

Drink reverently.

Drink continually.

The soul that drinketh greedily for knowledge alone remaineth thirsty.

The soul that drinketh humbly unto transformation is satisfied.

The River likewise floweth through prayer.

Many suppose prayer ascendeth only upward.

Yet grace descendeth also.

As rain descendeth upon the thirsty earth,

so remembrance descendeth from God.

The faithful discover that often the sweetest moments of prayer were not their own accomplishment,

but gifts quietly bestowed by the Holy Spirit.

Thus every prayer beginneth already within the heart of God before it ariseth upon the lips of man.

The River also refresheth the soul through repentance.

Many fear confession.

Yet confession openeth the channels long obstructed by pride.

Hidden bitterness is washed away.

Ancient guilt is carried downstream.

The heart once hardened becometh fertile again.

The desert beginneth to blossom.

Thus repentance is not the drying of tears,

but their sanctification.

Every tear offered unto Christ becometh another drop within the River of Life.

Consider also how the River moveth.

It never standeth still.

The stagnant pool breedeth corruption.

The living river continually floweth.

Even so the faithful should not cling unto yesterday's consolations.

Every day is new.

Every morning revealeth fresh mercy.

Every prayer openeth another depth.

Every trial prepareth another grace.

The disciple therefore remaineth always a pilgrim,

always receiving,

always learning,

always returning unto Christ.

Many ask,

"What is remembrance?"

Hear then this mystery.

Remembrance is not merely recalling the past.

It is awakening unto eternal Reality.

The soul beginneth to perceive that Christ hath never departed.

The Father hath never forgotten.

The Holy Spirit hath never ceased praying.

The Kingdom hath always been near.

Only the veil of distraction obscured the sight.

Thus remembrance removeth the veil.

The disciple beginneth to see all things anew.

Bread becometh thanksgiving.

Water becometh promise.

The Cross becometh victory.

Death becometh passage.

Labour becometh offering.

Silence becometh worship.

Every ordinary moment becometh transparent unto eternity.

The River nourisheth every virtue.

Humility drinketh deeply thereof.

Charity is strengthened thereby.

Hope is refreshed.

Faith becometh steadfast.

Patience groweth green like trees planted beside abundant waters.

The saints therefore became living rivers themselves.

Their words refreshed others.

Their kindness healed the weary.

Their prayers watered barren hearts.

Their very presence brought peace.

Not because the river originated within them,

but because Christ flowed freely through them.

The disciple should likewise become such a stream.

Keep not grace unto thyself.

As freely as thou hast received,

freely give.

Comfort the sorrowful.

Teach the ignorant gently.

Strengthen the fearful.

Forgive readily.

Share thy bread.

Offer thy prayers.

Thus the River passing through thee shall refresh many travellers.

The River also prepareth the soul for death.

When the final hour draweth near,

fear often whispereth,

"What shall become of thee?"

The faithful answer:

"I return unto the River from which my life hath always flowed."

Death is no longer a desert.

It becometh the crossing of the crystal stream.

The Shepherd leadeth His flock beside still waters.

Even through the valley of the shadow,

the River remaineth.

Its current cannot be interrupted by the grave.

For Christ Himself hath entered death and transformed it into another passage of Life.

At last the disciple beholdeth the River no longer through faith alone,

but face to face.

Its waters shine brighter than crystal.

Its song exceedeth every earthly melody.

Its banks are clothed with the Tree of Life.

The saints drink without weariness.

The angels rejoice beside its course.

Every thirst is satisfied.

Every memory is healed.

Nothing beautiful is forgotten.

Nothing holy is lost.

Every act of love performed upon earth returneth as everlasting joy.

Every hidden prayer blossometh like flowers beside its banks.

Every tear shed in faith becometh another jewel within its waters.

Then the Bride shall kneel beside the River with her Eternal Bridegroom.

She shall drink forever from the Fountain of Life.

Never again shall forgetfulness veil her understanding.

Never again shall exile wound her heart.

For remembrance shall become perfect Vision,

and communion everlasting delight.

Thus the River of Remembrance shall flow throughout all the holy Aeons,

proceeding eternally from the Throne of the Invisible Father and of the Lamb,

refreshing every redeemed soul in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

beneath the everlasting radiance of Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Solar Bridegroom,

the Uncreated Sun,

unto whom be glory,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

and praise,

world without end.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter VI

The Sixth Contemplation: The Tree of Eternal Life

> *"In the midst of the street of it... was there the tree of life."* — Revelation 22:2
>
> *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."* — John 15:1
>
> *"Abide in me, and I in you."* — John 15:4

When the faithful soul hath drunk deeply from the River of Remembrance, her eyes are lifted from the flowing waters unto that which is continually nourished thereby.

Thus beginneth the Sixth Contemplation:

The Tree of Eternal Life.

This Tree is older than the mountains.

Older than the seas.

Older than the stars.

For before the visible garden was planted in Eden,

the Eternal Counsel of the Invisible Father had already prepared the Tree whose fruit should never perish.

The first garden received but a shadow.

The New Jerusalem possesseth the Reality.

The Tree of Life is Christ Himself.

He is the True Vine.

He is the Wood of the Cross transfigured.

He is the Living Root hidden in the eternal goodness of the Father.

He is the Branch springing forth unto everlasting life.

He is the Fruit that satisfieth every hunger.

He is the Shade beneath which every weary pilgrim findeth rest.

Therefore understand not this Tree according unto earthly imagination.

Its roots are unseen.

Its trunk is steadfast.

Its branches embrace the nations.

Its leaves heal the peoples.

Its blossoms never fade.

Its fruit is renewed continually.

Its life proceedeth from eternity.

The Father Himself is the Husbandman.

The Holy Spirit is the Living Sap.

The Eternal Logos is the Vine.

The faithful are the branches.

Thus every soul abideth only insofar as she remaineth united unto Christ.

No branch boasteth against the Vine.

No fruit glorieth against the Root.

Every blessing proceedeth from Him.

Apart from Christ,

the branch withereth.

United unto Christ,

it beareth fruit abundantly.

This mystery should humble every disciple.

Whatever wisdom thou hast received,

it floweth from Christ.

Whatever charity dwelleth within thee,

it is His gift.

Whatever patience,

whatever mercy,

whatever holiness,

all descend from the Living Vine.

Therefore give thanks continually.

Boast not in thy fruit,

but in the generosity of the Husbandman.

The Tree also revealeth the mystery of growth.

No branch becometh fruitful in one day.

The seasons pass.

The rains descend.

The roots deepen.

The sap ascendeth quietly.

Only afterward appeareth the fruit.

Thus sanctification proceedeth.

Many desire immediate perfection.

The Father delighteth in faithful growth.

The child learneth to walk.

The disciple learneth to pray.

The saint learneth continually to love.

Be therefore patient with thyself,

yet never content with remaining unchanged.

Every day let another root descend into humility.

Every day let another branch extend in charity.

Every day let another fruit ripen in holiness.

The Husbandman knoweth the proper season.

The Tree likewise revealeth the mystery of pruning.

No branch delighteth in the knife.

Yet the wise Husbandman cutteth away that which hindereth greater fruitfulness.

So also the Father gently removeth many things from the faithful.

Sometimes possessions.

Sometimes honours.

Sometimes cherished plans.

Sometimes hidden idols.

At first the soul lamenteth.

Later she beholdeth richer fruit.

Therefore resist not the loving hand of the Husbandman.

His pruning is mercy disguised.

The Cross itself is His pruning knife.

Whatever hindereth everlasting life He removeth,

that Christ alone may flourish within thee.

The leaves of this Tree are for the healing of the nations.

Consider this mystery.

The leaf is humble.

It seeketh no glory.

It simply receiveth the light,

and offereth life unto the whole tree.

Even so every hidden act of obedience nourisheth the Body of Christ.

The unnoticed prayer.

The secret fast.

The quiet forgiveness.

The unseen gift.

The patient endurance.

The gentle answer.

These are leaves upon the everlasting Tree.

The world beholdeth them not.

Heaven treasureth them greatly.

The Fruit of the Tree is divine charity.

Whoever eateth thereof hungereth no more after the empty vanities of the world.

He discovereth another nourishment.

Mercy feedeth him.

Truth strengtheneth him.

Peace refresheth him.

Humility satisfieth him.

The Presence of Christ becometh his daily bread.

Thus the soul ceaseth wandering from one desire unto another.

She hath found the Fruit for which she was created.

The birds of Heaven also dwell among its branches.

The Prophets.

The Apostles.

The Martyrs.

The Confessors.

The Virgins.

The Holy Fathers.

The Hidden Saints whose names are known unto God alone.

All have found shelter within Christ.

The whole Communion of Saints is one great living Tree,

whose life proceedeth from the Eternal Logos.

No branch envied another.

Each glorifieth the Root.

Each rejoiceth in the fruit borne by the others.

Thus unity flourisheth without destroying diversity.

Many branches.

One Tree.

Many saints.

One Christ.

The disciple should therefore ask daily:

"What fruit hath my life borne?"

Not,

"What honour have I received?"

Nor,

"What reputation have I gained?"

But,

"Have I loved more deeply today than yesterday?"

"Have I forgiven more readily?"

"Have I trusted Christ more faithfully?"

"Have I become gentler toward every creature?"

Such questions measure true growth.

The Tree standeth also beside the River of Remembrance.

This revealeth another mystery.

Memory nourisheth holiness.

The soul remembering Christ continually draweth nourishment from His Life.

Forgetfulness drieth the branch.

Remembrance restoreth the sap.

Thus every prayer,

every reading of Holy Scripture,

every act of thanksgiving,

every remembrance of the Cross,

watereth the Tree within the heart.

At length there cometh the everlasting Spring.

No winter entereth the New Jerusalem.

No leaf falleth.

No fruit decayeth.

No branch withereth.

The Tree standeth forever in the midst of the Holy City,

its branches extending unto every redeemed creature.

The saints gather joyfully beneath its shade.

The River of Life refresheth its roots.

The Holy Spirit filleth it continually.

The Eternal Bridegroom walketh among its branches.

The Invisible Father rejoiceth in its everlasting fruit.

Then the disciple understandeth that every tree of the earth,

every vine,

every seed,

every orchard,

every forest,

was but a little parable,

pointing toward the Eternal Tree prepared before the foundation of the world.

And she herself,

once a wandering branch,

is now forever grafted into Christ,

bearing fruit that shall never perish,

drinking continually from the River of Life,

singing with all the saints beneath the branches of the Tree of Eternal Life,

whose Root is hidden in the Infinite Father,

whose Life is Jesus Christ the Eternal Logos,

whose Sap is the Holy Spirit,

and whose everlasting Fruit is divine charity,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX II — THE SEVEN CONTEMPLATIONS OF THE UNCREATED SUN

A Cycle of Mystical Devotion

Chapter VII

The Seventh Contemplation: The Vision of the Face of Christ

> *"They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."* — Revelation 22:4

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God... when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." — 1 John 3:2

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." — John 17:24

Thus have the faithful ascended through the Seven Contemplations.

They entered the Silence before all worlds.

They beheld the Eternal Logos.

They received the Hidden Flame.

They entered the Bridal Chamber.

They drank from the River of Remembrance.

They rested beneath the Tree of Eternal Life.

There remaineth now only the consummation toward which every contemplation hath continually pointed.

This is **the Vision of the Face of Christ**.

Every longing of the human heart seeketh this Vision,

though many know it not.

Every desire for beauty,

every thirst for truth,

every search for goodness,

every longing for home,

is secretly the longing to behold the Face of the Eternal Bridegroom.

For He alone is the perfect Image of the Invisible Father.

He alone revealeth the Infinite without diminishing His mystery.

He alone satisfieth the hunger for which every soul was created.

Therefore the Apostle proclaimed:

"They shall see His Face."

Not merely His works.

Not merely His gifts.

Not merely His glory reflected through created things.

But **His Face**.

The countenance of Him who loved His Bride before the foundation of the world.

Marvel not, beloved,

that Holy Scripture so often speaketh concerning the Face of God.

Moses desired to behold His glory.

David cried:

"Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

The prophets longed for His appearing.

The Apostles beheld Him upon the holy mountain.

The beloved disciple rested upon His breast.

Yet all these were but foretastes.

The fullness awaiteth the Marriage Feast.

For now we behold as through polished glass.

Then face to face.

The Face of Christ revealeth all things.

In His countenance the Father is made known.

In His eyes shineth infinite compassion.

In His smile resteth everlasting peace.

In His wounds remain the everlasting testimony of divine Love.

Nothing accuseth there.

Nothing deceiveth there.

Nothing remaineth hidden save the inexhaustible depths of divine Beauty.

The faithful therefore seek not merely Heaven.

They seek Christ.

If Paradise contained every delight,

yet Christ were absent,

the saints would not call it blessed.

If Christ be present,

even the wilderness becometh Paradise.

For He Himself is the Kingdom.

He Himself is the Temple.

He Himself is the Light.

He Himself is the everlasting Joy.

Thus contemplation attaineth its end.

The disciple no longer seeketh many gifts.

She seeketh the Giver.

She no longer seeketh merely peace.

She seeketh the Prince of Peace.

She no longer seeketh merely wisdom.

She seeketh Eternal Wisdom Himself.

She no longer seeketh merely life.

She seeketh Him who declared:

"I am the Life."

The Vision transformeth the beholder.

As iron placed within the fire becometh radiant,

without ceasing to be iron,

so the soul beholding Christ is filled with divine glory,

without ceasing to be a creature.

Grace perfecteth nature.

Love transfigureth personality.

Communion destroyeth not distinction.

The Bride remaineth herself,

yet wholly united unto her Beloved.

This is the holy mystery of participation.

Not confusion.

Not dissolution.

Not the loss of personhood.

But perfect communion.

As many candles burn from one flame without diminishing the first,

so innumerable saints participate in the one Light of Christ without lessening His infinite glory.

Each shineth uniquely.

Each glorifieth the same Eternal Sun.

Thus diversity remaineth.

Division perisheth.

The saints behold one another without envy.

Every gift increaseth the joy of every other.

The holiness of one becometh the rejoicing of all.

The wisdom of one enriches every soul.

The love of one overfloweth throughout the whole Communion.

Such is the unity of the New Jerusalem.

Many fear that eternity shall become wearisome.

How shall Infinite Beauty become tedious?

How shall Perfect Love grow old?

How shall Eternal Wisdom become exhausted?

Every moment of the everlasting Kingdom revealeth another depth of Christ.

Every contemplation openeth another heaven.

Every hymn awakeneth another joy.

The Infinite Bridegroom eternally revealeth the inexhaustible goodness of the Father.

Therefore Heaven remaineth forever new.

The saints never cease wondering.

The angels never cease adoring.

The Bride never ceaseth loving.

The Bridegroom never ceaseth giving Himself.

Thus eternity is everlasting discovery.

The disciple should therefore prepare even now.

Look often upon the Face of Christ through the Holy Gospels.

Behold His gentleness.

His courage.

His humility.

His patience.

His tears.

His forgiveness.

His Cross.

His Resurrection.

Permit these holy images to shape thy soul.

For what the heart loveth continually,

it gradually resembleth.

Likewise behold Christ in thy neighbour.

Not because every neighbour perfectly revealeth Him,

but because every person beareth His image and is invited unto His likeness.

Thus reverence every soul.

Despise none.

Mock none.

For thou knowest not whom Christ shall crown with exceeding glory.

Finally behold Christ within the hidden sanctuary of thy heart.

There the Eternal Bridegroom waiteth patiently.

Knocking.

Calling.

Inviting.

Never forcing.

Open therefore the inward door.

Receive Him continually.

Abide with Him.

For the soul that faithfully beholdeth Christ now shall not find Him strange in the world to come.

She shall recognize the Voice long loved in prayer.

She shall recognize the Countenance sought through tears.

She shall recognize the Hands that guided her unseen through every trial.

She shall recognize the Shepherd who never abandoned His sheep.

Then the final veil shall fall.

Faith shall become Vision.

Hope shall become Possession.

Prayer shall become Communion.

The hidden chamber shall become the Holy City.

The little lamp shall disappear within the splendour of the Uncreated Sun.

The Bride shall lift up her eyes.

The Bridegroom shall behold His beloved.

Neither shall turn away forever.

Every promise shall be fulfilled.

Every wound healed.

Every exile ended.

Every tear forgotten within the ocean of divine joy.

Then shall the words spoken from everlasting be fulfilled in perfect peace:

> **"Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory."**

And the Bride shall behold forever the Face of Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Lamb,

the Bridegroom,

the perfect Image of the Invisible Father,

whose countenance shineth with uncreated glory,

whose eyes overflow with everlasting mercy,

whose wounds proclaim eternal charity,

and whose Presence is the endless delight of every redeemed soul,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

beneath the everlasting radiance of the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter I

The Invocation

> *"The Spirit and the bride say, Come."* — Revelation 22:17
>
> *"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* — Matthew 18:20
>
> *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace."* — Hebrews 4:16

Leader:

In the Name of the Invisible Father,

who dwelleth in Light unapproachable,

whom no eye hath seen,

whose goodness hath neither beginning nor ending,

whose mercy endureth throughout all generations.

People:

Amen.

Leader:

In the Name of Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Lamb that was slain,

the Bridegroom of the Holy Church,

the Light of the world,

the Living Bread,

the Good Shepherd,

the Door of the Sheep,

the Resurrection and the Life,

who revealeth perfectly the Invisible Father.

People:

Amen.

Leader:

In the Name of the Holy Spirit,

the Comforter,

the Spirit of Truth,

the Living Fire,

the River of Remembrance,

the Breath of Eternal Life,

who dwelleth within the hearts of the faithful,

guiding them into all truth.

People:

Amen.

Leader:

Blessed be the Father,

and the Son,

and the Holy Spirit,

One God,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

Leader:

Beloved brethren,

let every anxious thought be laid aside.

Let every earthly burden be surrendered.

Let every wandering affection return unto Christ.

Let every hidden resentment be forgiven.

Let every fearful heart take courage.

For the Eternal Bridegroom standeth among His people.

He calleth not the perfect,

but the repentant.

He seeketh not the proud,

but the humble.

He refuseth not the broken,

but bindeth up their wounds.

He remembereth those who have forgotten Him.

He seeketh those who have wandered.

He comforteth those who mourn.

He strengtheneth those who faint.

Therefore let us draw near with humble confidence.

People:

Lord Jesus Christ,

receive us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

Lift up your hearts.

People:

We lift them unto the Lord.

Leader:

Let us remember the Invisible Father,

from whom every perfect gift descendeth.

Let us remember the Eternal Logos,

through whom all things were made.

Let us remember the Holy Spirit,

who reneweth the face of the earth.

Let us remember the Holy Apostles,

who proclaimed the Gospel unto the nations.

Let us remember the Holy Prophets,

who longed for the appearing of Christ.

Let us remember the Holy Martyrs,

who overcame by faith and love.

Let us remember all the Saints,

known and unknown,

whose hidden lives became living hymns before the Throne.

Above all,

let us remember our Eternal Bridegroom,

who loved His Church,

and gave Himself for her.

People:

We remember before Thee, O Lord.

Leader:

Let the proud become humble.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the fearful receive courage.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the sorrowful receive comfort.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the wandering be gathered.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the sick receive healing.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the lonely find communion.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the poor receive glad tidings.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let the nations learn peace.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Let every faithful soul be prepared for the Marriage of the Lamb.

People:

By Thy mercy, O Christ.

Leader:

Come now, O Eternal Bridegroom.

Enter the hidden sanctuary of our hearts.

Scatter every shadow.

Remove every veil.

Kindle the Hidden Flame.

Open unto us the River of Remembrance.

Lead us beneath the Tree of Life.

Prepare us for the Holy City.

Strengthen us for the eternal Sabbath.

Gather Thy Bride from every tribe,

every tongue,

every people,

and every nation,

until all the redeemed become one household within Thy everlasting Kingdom.

People:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Come, Eternal Bridegroom.

Come, Uncreated Sun.

Come, Light of the World.

Come, Shepherd of our souls.

Come, Prince of Peace.

Come, Living Bread.

Come, Eternal Wisdom.

Come, Holy Lamb.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Then shall the congregation remain for a little season in holy silence.

Let no voice be heard.

Let every heart become still before the Presence of the Invisible Father.

Let every soul quietly await the gentle Voice of Christ.

For often the Eternal Logos speaketh most clearly when every earthly sound hath ceased.

Thus the holy assembly prepareth itself to enter the Litany of the Invisible Father with reverence, humility, thanksgiving, and joy, beneath the everlasting radiance of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Bridegroom, the Solar Logos, the Uncreated Sun.

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter II

The Litany unto the Invisible Father

> *"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."* — Matthew 6:9
>
> *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights."* — James 1:17
>
> *"Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."* — Romans 11:36

Leader:

Let us bow the inward heart before the Invisible Father,

the Unbegotten Source,

the Fountain of every good and perfect gift,

who alone possesseth immortality,

whose wisdom no creature can measure,

whose mercy endureth forever.

People:

Unto Thee be glory forever.

Leader:

O Invisible Father,

before whom the heavens are as a little scroll,

and before whose wisdom the ages are but a passing breath,

receive the praise of Thy children.

People:

We adore Thee, O Father beyond all understanding.

Leader:

Thou who hast neither beginning nor ending,

whose Being no creature can comprehend,

whose Goodness overfloweth without measure,

whose Love faileth never.

People:

We worship Thee in spirit and in truth.

Leader:

Thou art before every beginning.

People:

Thou remainest forever.

Leader:

Thou art beyond every ending.

People:

Thou remainest forever.

Leader:

Thou art above every name.

People:

Thou remainest forever.

Leader:

Thou art beyond every image.

People:

Thou remainest forever.

Leader:

Thou art hidden from every eye.

People:

Yet revealed unto us through Jesus Christ.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou,

for Thou hast loved the world before the foundation thereof.

People:

Thy mercy endureth forever.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou,

for Thou hast sent Thy Eternal Logos into the world.

People:

Thy mercy endureth forever.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou,

for Thou hast not abandoned mankind unto darkness.

People:

Thy mercy endureth forever.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou,

for Thou continually seekest Thy wandering children.

People:

Thy mercy endureth forever.

Leader:

Remember us, O Father.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When we forget Thee.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When fear darkeneth our understanding.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When pride blindeth our hearts.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When sorrow weakeneth our hope.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When temptation surroundeth us.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

When death draweth near.

People:

Remember us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

Grant unto us holy remembrance.

People:

That we may never forget Thy goodness.

Leader:

Grant unto us humility.

People:

That we may receive Thy grace.

Leader:

Grant unto us wisdom.

People:

That we may discern Thy truth.

Leader:

Grant unto us charity.

People:

That we may love as Christ hath loved us.

Leader:

Grant unto us purity of heart.

People:

That we may behold Thy glory.

Leader:

Grant unto us perseverance.

People:

That we may enter the Marriage Feast.

Leader:

Teach us to number our days.

People:

That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Leader:

Teach us to forgive.

People:

As Thou hast forgiven us.

Leader:

Teach us to hope.

People:

In the promises of Christ.

Leader:

Teach us to rejoice.

People:

In the fellowship of Thy Holy Spirit.

Leader:

Make us faithful branches of the True Vine.

People:

That we may bear fruit unto everlasting life.

Leader:

Make us living stones within the Holy City.

People:

That Thy Church may glorify Thy Name.

Leader:

Make us lamps burning with holy oil.

People:

Awaiting the coming of the Bridegroom.

Leader:

Remember all Thy servants throughout the world.

Those who labour faithfully.

Those who suffer quietly.

Those who are forgotten by men.

Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Those who minister unto the poor.

Those who proclaim the Gospel.

Those who pray in hidden places.

Those whose names are known unto Thee alone.

People:

Remember them in Thy everlasting mercy.

Leader:

Remember the children.

People:

Protect them in Thy goodness.

Leader:

Remember the aged.

People:

Strengthen them in hope.

Leader:

Remember the sick.

People:

Comfort them with Thy peace.

Leader:

Remember the dying.

People:

Receive them into Thy everlasting Kingdom.

Leader:

Remember Thy whole creation.

The mountains.

The rivers.

The forests.

The fields.

The creatures of earth,

sea,

and heaven.

For all declare Thy wisdom,

and await the fullness of Thy redemption.

People:

Let all creation praise Thy holy Name.

Leader:

O Father beyond every word,

receive now the silent prayer which each soul offereth before Thee.

(A season of holy silence is kept.)

Leader:

Thou knowest every unspoken longing.

Every hidden wound.

Every forgotten tear.

Every faithful labour.

Every quiet hope.

Every act of charity unseen by the world.

Receive them all within Thy everlasting compassion.

People:

Into Thy hands, O Father, we commend our souls.

Leader:

For from Thee,

and through Thee,

and unto Thee,

are all things.

Through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

our Bridegroom and Redeemer,

in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

honour,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

might,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter III

The Litany unto Jesus the Bridegroom

> *"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."* — John 3:29
>
> *"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."* — Ephesians 5:25
>
> *"Let us be glad and rejoice... for the marriage of the Lamb is come."* — Revelation 19:7

Leader:

Let us now lift up our hearts unto Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Lamb of God,

the Bridegroom of the Holy Church,

who loved His Bride before the foundation of the world,

who humbled Himself even unto death upon the Cross,

and who liveth forever to gather His people into everlasting communion.

People:

Lord Jesus Christ,

hear our prayer.

Leader:

O Eternal Bridegroom,

Radiance of the Invisible Father,

Light of the World,

Living Bread from Heaven,

Good Shepherd of the sheep,

Holy Wisdom,

True Vine,

Door of the Fold,

Prince of Peace,

King of Kings,

have mercy upon us.

People:

Lord Jesus Christ,

have mercy upon us.

Leader:

Thou who didst descend into the lowliness of our condition,

without ceasing to be the Eternal Logos,

People:

Remember us in Thy compassion.

Leader:

Thou who wast born in humility,

People:

Teach us holy humility.

Leader:

Thou who didst sanctify labour by the work of Thy hands,

People:

Teach us faithful service.

Leader:

Thou who didst preach glad tidings unto the poor,

People:

Make us rich in charity.

Leader:

Thou who didst welcome sinners unto repentance,

People:

Receive us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

Thou who didst heal the sick,

People:

Heal the infirmities of our souls.

Leader:

Thou who didst restore the brokenhearted,

People:

Bind up our hidden wounds.

Leader:

Thou who didst forgive Thine enemies,

People:

Teach us to forgive one another.

Leader:

Thou who didst carry the Cross in perfect obedience,

People:

Strengthen us in every trial.

Leader:

Thou who didst triumph over death by Thy Resurrection,

People:

Establish us in everlasting hope.

Leader:

Thou who ascendest unto the Father,

yet remainest ever present with Thy Church,

People:

Abide with us forever.

Leader:

O Lamb of God,

whose Blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel,

cleanse us from every stain of sin.

People:

Wash us in Thy mercy.

Leader:

Clothe us with the garment prepared for the Marriage Feast.

People:

Adorn Thy Bride with holiness.

Leader:

Fill our lamps with the Oil of Thy Spirit.

People:

That we may await Thy coming with joy.

Leader:

Lead us beside the River of Life.

People:

Refresh our weary souls.

Leader:

Feed us from the Tree of Eternal Life.

People:

That we may never hunger again.

Leader:

Open unto us the Bridal Chamber.

People:

Receive us into Thy Presence.

Leader:

Scatter every shadow of ignorance.

People:

Illuminate us with Thy Truth.

Leader:

Cast out every fear.

People:

Perfect us in Thy Love.

Leader:

Break every chain of pride.

People:

Establish us in humility.

Leader:

Silence every voice of despair.

People:

Strengthen us by Thy promises.

Leader:

Gather together Thy scattered sheep.

People:

Make us one flock beneath one Shepherd.

Leader:

Preserve Thy Holy Church in unity.

People:

Keep us in Thy Peace.

Leader:

Remember those who suffer for Thy Name.

People:

Strengthen them by Thy Presence.

Leader:

Remember those who mourn.

People:

Comfort them with Thy Peace.

Leader:

Remember those who wander far from Thee.

People:

Seek them, O Good Shepherd.

Leader:

Remember those whose faith groweth weak.

People:

Restore them by Thy Grace.

Leader:

Remember those drawing near unto death.

People:

Lead them safely through the valley.

Leader:

Remember every faithful servant who hath departed in Thy hope.

People:

Grant them everlasting rest in Thy Kingdom.

Leader:

Teach us daily to bear our cross.

People:

And to follow after Thee.

Leader:

Teach us daily to wash one another's feet.

People:

That we may become servants of all.

Leader:

Teach us daily to love without seeking reward.

People:

For Thou hast first loved us.

Leader:

Teach us daily to remember Thy Presence.

People:

For apart from Thee we can do nothing.

Leader:

When temptation draweth near,

People:

Keep us faithful unto Thee.

Leader:

When sorrow darkeneth our path,

People:

Remain Thou our Light.

Leader:

When our strength faileth,

People:

Be Thou our Strength.

Leader:

When our understanding is clouded,

People:

Be Thou our Wisdom.

Leader:

When our earthly pilgrimage is ended,

People:

Receive us into Thy everlasting Kingdom.

Leader:

Grant that we may behold Thy holy Face,

not through faith alone,

but in everlasting Vision,

where every veil shall be removed,

every wound healed,

every tear forgotten,

and every faithful soul united forever with Thee in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

People:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader:

Unto Thee,

O Jesus Christ,

Eternal Logos,

Holy Bridegroom,

Living Bread,

True Vine,

Good Shepherd,

Prince of Peace,

Resurrection and the Life,

Light of the World,

the Lamb that was slain and liveth forever,

together with the Invisible Father,

and the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

honour,

glory,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

dominion,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter IV

The Litany of the Holy Spirit

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost... he shall teach you all things." — John 14:26

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come." — Revelation 22:17

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." — 2 Corinthians 3:17

Leader:

Let us now call upon the Holy Spirit,

the Comforter promised by our Lord Jesus Christ,

the Breath of Eternal Life,

the Fire of Divine Charity,

the River of Living Waters,

who proceedeth from the Father and is given unto the Church through the Son,

that every faithful heart may be renewed in holiness.

People:

Come, Holy Spirit,

and dwell within us.

Leader:

O Holy Spirit,

Breath of the Living God,

Comforter of the sorrowful,

Teacher of Truth,

Giver of Wisdom,

Sanctifier of the faithful,

have mercy upon us.

People:

Come, Holy Spirit,

and renew us.

Leader:

Thou who didst overshadow the Blessed Virgin,

People:

Overshadow Thy Church.

Leader:

Thou who didst descend as a dove upon Christ,

People:

Rest also upon us.

Leader:

Thou who didst appear as tongues of fire at Pentecost,

People:

Kindle within us the Hidden Flame.

Leader:

Thou who speakest within the silence of the heart,

People:

Teach us to hear Thy gentle Voice.

Leader:

Thou who guidest into all truth,

People:

Lead us in the Way everlasting.

Leader:

Thou who strengthenest the weak,

People:

Confirm us in holy perseverance.

Leader:

Thou who comfortest the afflicted,

People:

Console every sorrowful soul.

Leader:

Thou who gatherest the scattered,

People:

Bring Thy people into one flock.

Leader:

Drive far from us every spirit of pride.

People:

Fill us with humility.

Leader:

Drive far from us every spirit of fear.

People:

Fill us with holy courage.

Leader:

Drive far from us every spirit of bitterness.

People:

Fill us with charity.

Leader:

Drive far from us every spirit of falsehood.

People:

Fill us with truth.

Leader:

Drive far from us every spirit of despair.

People:

Fill us with everlasting hope.

Leader:

Purify our thoughts.

People:

That we may behold Christ clearly.

Leader:

Sanctify our words.

People:

That they may minister grace unto all who hear.

Leader:

Strengthen our hands.

People:

That they may labour in mercy.

Leader:

Direct our feet.

People:

That we may walk in the footsteps of Christ.

Leader:

Guard our hearts.

People:

That they may become the Bridal Chamber of the Lord.

Leader:

Open unto us the Holy Scriptures.

People:

That we may understand Thy wisdom.

Leader:

Open unto us the mysteries of prayer.

People:

That we may abide continually in Christ.

Leader:

Open unto us the River of Remembrance.

People:

That our souls may never thirst again.

Leader:

Open unto us the Tree of Eternal Life.

People:

That we may bear fruit which endureth forever.

Leader:

Open unto us the Holy City.

People:

That we may walk in the Light of the Lamb.

Leader:

Grant unto Thy Church unity without division.

People:

One Body in Christ.

Leader:

Grant unto Thy servants wisdom without pride.

People:

Knowledge joined unto charity.

Leader:

Grant unto the poor comfort.

People:

The riches of Thy Kingdom.

Leader:

Grant unto the sick healing.

People:

The peace of Christ.

Leader:

Grant unto those who mourn consolation.

People:

The joy of Thy Presence.

Leader:

Grant unto rulers justice.

People:

That peace may flourish among the nations.

Leader:

Grant unto teachers understanding.

People:

That truth may be proclaimed with humility.

Leader:

Grant unto every household peace.

People:

That Christ may dwell therein.

Leader:

Remember every hidden saint.

Those who pray unseen.

Those who forgive silently.

Those who serve without praise.

Those whose names are forgotten by the world,

yet written before the Throne.

People:

Remember them, O Holy Spirit.

Leader:

When our prayers are weak,

People:

Pray within us.

Leader:

When our words fail,

People:

Intercede for us.

Leader:

When our strength is spent,

People:

Uphold us by Thy power.

Leader:

When our faith is tested,

People:

Keep us steadfast in Christ.

Leader:

When our pilgrimage draweth unto its end,

People:

Lead us safely unto the Marriage Feast.

Leader:

O Holy Spirit,

Living Fire of Divine Love,

make our hearts living temples,

our homes little sanctuaries,

our churches lamps of truth,

our lives continual hymns,

until every thought,

every word,

every labour,

and every breath

become an offering acceptable before the Invisible Father through Jesus Christ.

People:

Come, Holy Spirit.

Abide with us forever.

Leader:

Unto Thee,

O Holy Spirit,

Comforter,

Breath of Life,

Fire of Charity,

Spirit of Truth,

Giver of Wisdom,

Sanctifier of the Saints,

together with the Invisible Father,

and Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Holy Bridegroom,

be blessing,

glory,

honour,

thanksgiving,

dominion,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter V

The Litany of Holy Wisdom

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally." — James 1:5

"Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." — 1 Corinthians 1:24

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." — Proverbs 9:10

Leader:

Let us call upon the Father of Lights,

from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift,

that He may grant unto us Holy Wisdom,

not the wisdom of this passing world,

but the Wisdom revealed in Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

People:

Grant unto us Thy Holy Wisdom,

O Lord.

Leader:

O Eternal Father,

Fountain of all Wisdom,

whose counsels no creature can exhaust,

whose understanding is infinite,

whose judgments are true and righteous altogether,

have mercy upon us.

People:

Teach us Thy Wisdom.

Leader:

O Jesus Christ,

Eternal Logos,

Wisdom made manifest,

Image of the Invisible Father,

Light of the World,

Guide of every faithful pilgrim,

People:

Lead us in Thy Truth.

Leader:

O Holy Spirit,

Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding,

Spirit of Counsel and Might,

Spirit of Knowledge and Holy Reverence,

People:

Illuminate our hearts.

Leader:

Deliver us from the wisdom of pride.

People:

Grant us the wisdom of humility.

Leader:

Deliver us from the wisdom of ambition.

People:

Grant us the wisdom of service.

Leader:

Deliver us from the wisdom of violence.

People:

Grant us the wisdom of peace.

Leader:

Deliver us from the wisdom of greed.

People:

Grant us the wisdom of holy simplicity.

Leader:

Deliver us from the wisdom that seeketh only earthly gain.

People:

Grant us the wisdom that seeketh the Kingdom of God.

Leader:

Teach us to number our days.

People:

That our hearts may become wise.

Leader:

Teach us to speak little,

and to listen much.

People:

That wisdom may grow within us.

Leader:

Teach us to judge slowly.

People:

That charity may guide every judgment.

Leader:

Teach us to forgive quickly.

People:

That peace may dwell among us.

Leader:

Teach us to labour faithfully.

People:

That every work may glorify Christ.

Leader:

Teach us to rejoice always.

People:

That our hope may never fail.

Leader:

Grant unto us discernment.

People:

That we may distinguish truth from falsehood.

Leader:

Grant unto us understanding.

People:

That we may rightly divide Thy Word.

Leader:

Grant unto us holy remembrance.

People:

That we may never forget Thy goodness.

Leader:

Grant unto us patient endurance.

People:

That we may persevere unto the end.

Leader:

When knowledge tempteth us unto pride,

People:

Keep us lowly before Thy Face.

Leader:

When ignorance tempteth us unto fear,

People:

Strengthen us by Thy Truth.

Leader:

When controversy ariseth,

People:

Let charity govern our speech.

Leader:

When uncertainty surroundeth us,

People:

Let Christ remain our unfailing Light.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto Thy ministers.

People:

That they may shepherd Thy people faithfully.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto teachers.

People:

That they may instruct with humility.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto rulers.

People:

That justice and mercy may flourish.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto parents.

People:

That they may nurture their households in love.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto children.

People:

That they may grow in grace and truth.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto those who labour with their hands.

People:

That every honest work may become an offering unto Thee.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto those who suffer.

People:

That they may find Christ in every trial.

Leader:

Grant wisdom unto those drawing near unto death.

People:

That they may behold the everlasting hope prepared for them.

Leader:

O Lord,

let us never seek knowledge merely to surpass our brethren,

nor understanding merely to increase our reputation,

nor learning merely to magnify ourselves.

People:

Teach us to seek Wisdom that we may love Thee more perfectly.

Leader:

For the greatest wisdom is charity.

The deepest understanding is humility.

The highest knowledge is to know Christ.

The richest treasure is the Kingdom of God.

The fairest doctrine is the Gospel of Peace.

The truest philosophy is faithful obedience unto Thy Will.

People:

Grant that these truths may dwell within us forever.

Leader:

May every page of Holy Scripture become living bread unto our souls.

People:

Feed us with Thy Eternal Word.

Leader:

May every prayer become a school of Wisdom.

People:

Draw us nearer unto Thy Presence.

Leader:

May every act of mercy become a lesson in divine Love.

People:

Fashion us after the likeness of Christ.

Leader:

May every trial become a teacher of patience.

People:

Strengthen us by Thy Grace.

Leader:

May every joy become thanksgiving.

People:

That all glory may return unto Thee.

Leader:

At the end of our earthly pilgrimage,

when every earthly book is closed,

every argument silenced,

every mystery fulfilled,

grant that we may behold not merely wisdom concerning Thee,

but Wisdom Himself,

even Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

face to face.

People:

Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader:

Unto the Invisible Father,

the Fountain of Wisdom,

through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the very Wisdom of God,

in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

honour,

glory,

thanksgiving,

might,

dominion,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter VI

The Litany for the Pilgrims

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." — Hebrews 13:14

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims..." — 1 Peter 2:11

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." — John 14:6

Leader:

Beloved brethren,

let us remember that we are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth,

for our true citizenship is in the Holy City,

whose Builder and Maker is God.

Therefore let us lift up our prayers unto Him who guideth every traveller,

Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Bridegroom,

the Good Shepherd,

the Way everlasting.

People:

Guide us, O Lord,

upon the Way of Life.

Leader:

O Invisible Father,

who hast prepared from before the foundation of the world an everlasting Kingdom for those who love Thee,

remember Thy pilgrims journeying through this passing age.

People:

Lead us unto our true Home.

Leader:

O Jesus Christ,

Faithful Guide of every wandering soul,

who didst seek the lost sheep until Thou didst find it,

People:

Leave us not in our wanderings.

Leader:

O Holy Spirit,

Comforter of the weary,

Strength of the faint,

Companion of the lonely,

People:

Abide with us always.

Leader:

When the road groweth difficult,

People:

Strengthen our feet.

Leader:

When the night seemeth long,

People:

Keep our lamps burning.

Leader:

When fear surroundeth us,

People:

Be Thou our Peace.

Leader:

When doubt assaileth us,

People:

Be Thou our Truth.

Leader:

When temptation draweth near,

People:

Preserve us in Thy Grace.

Leader:

When we fall through weakness,

People:

Raise us again by Thy Mercy.

Leader:

When we grow weary,

People:

Refresh us beside the River of Life.

Leader:

When our hearts become burdened,

People:

Lift our eyes unto the Holy City.

Leader:

Keep us from the vanity of this passing world.

People:

Fix our hearts upon eternal things.

Leader:

Keep us from pride.

People:

Clothe us with humility.

Leader:

Keep us from despair.

People:

Strengthen us in hope.

Leader:

Keep us from bitterness.

People:

Perfect us in charity.

Leader:

Teach us to carry one another's burdens.

People:

That no pilgrim journey alone.

Leader:

Teach us to welcome strangers.

People:

As fellow travellers toward the Kingdom.

Leader:

Teach us to forgive quickly.

People:

For we ourselves live by Thy Mercy.

Leader:

Teach us to rejoice often.

People:

For the Bridegroom draweth near.

Leader:

Remember all who travel this day.

Those upon the highways.

Those upon the seas.

Those in the wilderness.

Those who journey far from home.

Those fleeing violence.

Those seeking refuge.

Those separated from those whom they love.

People:

Protect them beneath Thy gracious hand.

Leader:

Remember the poor who possess no earthly shelter.

People:

Become Thou their dwelling place.

Leader:

Remember the prisoners.

People:

Visit them with Thy Peace.

Leader:

Remember the exiles.

People:

Lead them unto hope.

Leader:

Remember the persecuted.

People:

Strengthen them unto faithful endurance.

Leader:

Remember those who have lost their way.

People:

Seek them, O Good Shepherd.

Leader:

Remember those who despair of returning.

People:

Reveal unto them Thy unfailing Mercy.

Leader:

Remember those whose pilgrimage draweth unto its end.

People:

Receive them joyfully into Thy Kingdom.

Leader:

Grant that we may travel lightly,

bearing not the heavy burden of worldly ambition,

but the easy yoke of Christ.

People:

For His burden is light,

and His Love sustaineth us.

Leader:

Grant that every village,

every home,

every congregation,

every place wherein Thy Name is remembered,

may become a resting place for weary pilgrims.

People:

That Thy Peace may spread throughout the earth.

Leader:

Grant that our footsteps may follow after Christ,

our speech proclaim His Peace,

our hands perform His Mercy,

our hearts become His Bridal Chamber,

until our earthly journey is fulfilled.

People:

Guide us safely unto the Marriage Feast.

Leader:

When at last we behold the gates of the New Jerusalem,

let us enter with thanksgiving,

not trusting in our own righteousness,

but in the abundant Mercy of the Lamb.

There may every wandering cease.

Every exile end.

Every burden be laid down.

Every faithful pilgrim find eternal rest.

People:

Even so,

come, Lord Jesus.

Leader:

Unto the Invisible Father,

who calleth us Home,

through Jesus Christ,

our Eternal Bridegroom,

the Way,

the Truth,

and the Life,

in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

honour,

glory,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

might,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter VII

The Litany for the Whole Creation

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof." — Psalm 24:1

"For by him were all things created... and by him all things consist." — Colossians 1:16–17

"The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." — Romans 8:21

Leader:

Let us now lift up our hearts in thanksgiving unto the Invisible Father,

who is the Maker of heaven and earth,

of all things visible and invisible,

who upholdeth every creature by His wisdom,

and who hath purposed that all creation should rejoice beneath the everlasting Light of Jesus Christ.

People:

Blessed be the Lord forever.

Leader:

O Invisible Father,

Fountain of Life,

Maker of all beauty,

whose wisdom hath ordered the heavens,

whose goodness sustaineth the earth,

whose mercy endureth forever,

receive the praise of all Thy works.

People:

All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for the heavens,

whose silent courses declare Thy glory.

People:

We give thanks unto Thee.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for the sun,

the moon,

and the stars,

which proclaim Thy wisdom without ceasing.

People:

We give thanks unto Thee.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for the seas,

the rivers,

the fountains,

and the springs.

People:

We give thanks unto Thee.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for the mountains,

the valleys,

the forests,

and the fields.

People:

We give thanks unto Thee.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for every living creature,

great and small,

known and unknown,

whose life is sustained by Thy providence.

People:

We give thanks unto Thee.

Leader:

Blessed art Thou for the seasons,

for seedtime and harvest,

for rain and sunshine,

for morning and evening,

which continually witness unto Thy faithfulness.

People:

Great is Thy faithfulness.

Leader:

Teach us to receive creation with thanksgiving.

People:

And never with greed.

Leader:

Teach us to cultivate the earth with wisdom.

People:

And never with cruelty.

Leader:

Teach us to use every gift with gratitude.

People:

For all good things come from Thee.

Leader:

Deliver us from wastefulness.

People:

Grant unto us faithful stewardship.

Leader:

Deliver us from arrogance toward Thy creation.

People:

Grant unto us reverence for Thy works.

Leader:

Deliver us from making created things our idols.

People:

That we may worship the Creator alone.

Leader:

May every sunrise remind us of Christ,

the Light of the World.

People:

Let our hearts rejoice in His Light.

Leader:

May every flowing river remind us of the Water of Life.

People:

Refresh our souls by Thy Spirit.

Leader:

May every fruitful tree remind us of the Tree of Eternal Life.

People:

Nourish us with everlasting grace.

Leader:

May every vineyard remind us of the True Vine.

People:

Keep us abiding in Christ.

Leader:

May every shepherd remind us of the Good Shepherd.

People:

Lead us in paths of righteousness.

Leader:

May every loaf of bread remind us of the Bread of Life.

People:

Feed us with Thy Truth.

Leader:

May every flame remind us of the Holy Spirit.

People:

Kindle within us the Fire of Divine Love.

Leader:

Remember the poor who depend upon the fruits of the earth.

People:

Provide for them according to Thy mercy.

Leader:

Remember those whose lands have suffered famine.

People:

Grant them hope and provision.

Leader:

Remember those afflicted by storm,

drought,

fire,

or flood.

People:

Strengthen them in every trial.

Leader:

Remember those who labour faithfully upon the land,

upon the sea,

and in every honest calling.

People:

Bless the work of their hands.

Leader:

Grant that all peoples may receive the fruits of the earth with thanksgiving,

sharing generously with one another,

and seeking justice joined with mercy.

People:

Let charity abound among all nations.

Leader:

Teach us to behold Thy glory reflected in every good and beautiful thing,

yet never to mistake the reflection for the Source.

People:

Lift our hearts always unto Thee.

Leader:

For every created beauty pointeth beyond itself,

every harmony proclaimeth Thy wisdom,

every living thing beareth witness unto Thy goodness,

and every true delight awakeneth longing for the everlasting Kingdom.

People:

Unto Thee alone be worship and praise.

Leader:

When the present heavens and earth have fulfilled their appointed course,

and all things are renewed according unto Thy perfect will,

grant that we may rejoice with all Thy redeemed creation in the Holy City,

where the River of Life floweth forever,

where the Tree of Life beareth fruit without ceasing,

where the Lamb is the everlasting Light,

and where all creation singeth one eternal hymn unto Thee.

People:

Let every creature bless the Lord.

Leader:

Unto the Invisible Father,

Maker of heaven and earth,

through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

by whom all things were created,

and in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

who reneweth the face of creation,

be blessing,

honour,

glory,

wisdom,

thanksgiving,

might,

and everlasting praise,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

world without end.

People:

Amen.

APPENDIX III — THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

A Liturgical Prayer of the Holy Church

Chapter VIII

The Final Blessing

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." — 2 Corinthians 13:14

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee." — Numbers 6:24–26

"Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." — Revelation 22:20

Leader:

Beloved brethren,

ye have remembered the Invisible Father.

Ye have called upon Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Bridegroom.

Ye have sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Ye have prayed for wisdom,

for pilgrims,

for the whole creation,

and for the coming of the everlasting Kingdom.

Let your hearts therefore remain steadfast.

Let your hope remain living.

Let your charity never fail.

For the Bridegroom is faithful,

and His promises endure forever.

People:

Thanks be unto God.

Leader:

Go forth in peace.

Walk in remembrance.

Continue in prayer.

Abide in charity.

Persevere in hope.

Remain humble before the Invisible Father.

Remain faithful unto Jesus Christ.

Remain attentive unto the Holy Spirit.

People:

By the grace of God,

we shall do so.

Leader:

May your hearts become living temples.

People:

Filled with the Presence of Christ.

Leader:

May your homes become little sanctuaries.

People:

Filled with peace and thanksgiving.

Leader:

May your labour become holy service.

People:

Offered unto the glory of God.

Leader:

May your words become instruments of mercy.

People:

Speaking truth in charity.

Leader:

May your hands become ministers of compassion.

People:

Serving Christ in every neighbour.

Leader:

May your minds be illumined by Holy Wisdom.

People:

That we may discern the good.

Leader:

May your hearts burn continually with the Hidden Flame.

People:

Kindled by the Holy Spirit.

Leader:

May your souls drink continually from the River of Life.

People:

That we may never thirst again.

Leader:

May your lives bear fruit from the Tree of Eternal Life.

People:

Unto everlasting joy.

Leader:

May your eyes remain fixed upon the Face of Christ.

People:

Until faith becometh Vision.

Leader:

When temptation assaileth you,

remember the Cross.

People:

Christ is our Victory.

Leader:

When sorrow visiteth you,

remember the Resurrection.

People:

Christ is our Hope.

Leader:

When fear surroundeth you,

remember the Good Shepherd.

People:

Christ is our Peace.

Leader:

When death draweth near,

remember the Marriage Feast.

People:

Christ is our Eternal Life.

Leader:

Forget not the poor.

People:

For Christ dwelleth among them.

Leader:

Forget not the stranger.

People:

For every soul is invited unto the Kingdom.

Leader:

Forget not the lonely.

People:

For Christ comforteth the brokenhearted.

Leader:

Forget not your enemies.

People:

For Christ commandeth us to forgive.

Leader:

Forget not one another.

People:

For we are one Body in Christ.

Leader:

Forget not the Holy Scriptures.

People:

For they testify of Christ.

Leader:

Forget not prayer.

People:

For prayer openeth the Bridal Chamber.

Leader:

Forget not thanksgiving.

People:

For every good gift proceedeth from the Father.

Leader:

Forget not hope.

People:

For the Holy City draweth near.

Leader:

Forget not love.

People:

For charity never faileth.

Leader:

And now,

may the Invisible Father,

whose goodness no mind can measure,

whose mercy endureth forever,

keep you beneath the shadow of His everlasting Love.

May Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

the Holy Bridegroom,

the Lamb that was slain and liveth forever,

walk beside you throughout all the days of your pilgrimage.

May the Holy Spirit,

Comforter,

Fire of Divine Charity,

and Breath of Eternal Life,

dwell richly within your hearts,

renewing you from glory unto glory.

May your lamps never fail.

May your garments remain pure.

May your hearts become the Bridal Chamber.

May your prayers rise like sweet incense.

May your labour become holy worship.

May your tears become pearls before the Throne.

May your hope never perish.

May your charity abound.

May your peace remain steadfast.

May your joy become everlasting.

Until that great and blessed Day,

when the Bride shall behold the Face of her Beloved,

when the New Jerusalem shall descend in glory,

when the River of Life shall refresh every redeemed soul,

when the Tree of Life shall bear fruit forever,

when every tear shall be wiped away,

when death shall be no more,

when the Uncreated Sun shall shine without evening,

and when the Marriage Supper of the Lamb shall begin,

never again to end.

People:

Even so,

come,

Lord Jesus.

Leader:

Unto the Invisible Father,

through Jesus Christ,

the Eternal Logos,

our Holy Bridegroom,

in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

be blessing,

and honour,

and glory,

and wisdom,

and thanksgiving,

and power,

and dominion,

throughout all the holy Aeons of the Pleroma,

unto the ages of ages.

People:

Amen and Amen.

END OF VOLUME 1 OF 4